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THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The Future of

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

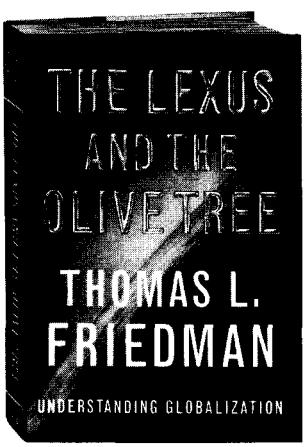
THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE

UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION

Thomas L. Friedman

PRAISE FROM FRANCIS FUKUYAMA:

"*The Lexus and the Olive Tree* is particularly satisfying for me because it confirms, vividly and in rich detail, the truth that we have indeed reached the end of history . . . Earlier in the decade, Tom Friedman used to ring me, saying, 'You know, you're essentially right about the victory of democracy and markets around the world.' He would then cite specific examples from his own observations as a journalist. He has collected all of these insights into a single, powerful volume that comes as close as anything we now have to a definition of the real character of the new world order . . .



"Samuel Huntington, in *The Clash of Civilisations*, sneered at what he called the 'Davos culture', that is, the world of the Lexus being promoted by the elite businessmen, politicians, academics and media types who attend the annual Davos World Economic Forum. Friedman argues persuasively that the Davos culture, while promoted by elites, is in fact profoundly democratising and represents a vision of society that countless poor around the world, voting with their feet, try to realise.

"The democratisation is threefold: of technology, of finance and of information. The microchip, which does not reward scale, is easily spread to all corners of the earth, and even the remotest village has access to information about the larger world outside it. The growth of mutual funds and the securitisation of emerging-market finance mean that the 'electronic herd' is no longer controlled by elite bankers and Wall Street brokers but indirectly by you and me and everyone else who has a pension fund. And information is no longer controlled by rigid hierarchies; everyone can communicate cheaply and potentially has access to knowledge about how their neighbour is doing. The cold war world was one of high walls created by centralised state hierarchies, built not just around countries but around companies, markets and cultures. These walls have now come down.

"They have been replaced by what Friedman calls the 'golden straitjacket': that is, the set of rules regarding economic policy that is enforced by the 'electronic herd' on any country that hopes to participate in the global economy and presided over by financial institutions." (*New Statesman*)

FARRAR STRAUS GIROUX

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The Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War

Charles Krauthammer

"WHEN I ordered our armed forces into combat", said President Clinton in his televised victory speech announcing the end of the Kosovo campaign, "we had three clear goals: [first] to enable the Kosovar people . . . to return to their homes with safety and self-government." Return them? There were virtually no refugees at the time he ordered the attack. The mass expulsions occurred *after* NATO began bombing.

In fact, on the day he did order the armed forces to attack, Clinton gave this as the clear goal in another televised address to the American people: "We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive."

Transmuting the fundamental aim of a war from "protect" to "return" was not merely a lie but, characteristically for Clinton, both brazen (he had announced the original policy just eleven weeks earlier before an audience of millions) and unnecessary. He could simply have stated how determined the allies were to see the Kosovar refugees returned. He did not have to say that it was his objective from the very beginning.

But perhaps it was not so unnecessary. It allowed him to conceal the fundamental failure that underlay the later victory. That failure was a failure of means.

The war was meant to prevent the humanitarian catastrophe that began hours after the NATO bombs started falling. That catastrophe might have been averted—the Serbs deterred from ethnically cleansing the Albanians—in one of two ways: either by pure deterrence (the mere threat of bombing) or by early surrender (a bombing campaign so devastating as to paralyze the Serb will to retain, let alone ethnically cleanse, Kosovo).

Pure deterrence was the original Albright plan and expectation at Rambouillet. It failed because Clinton—late of Iraq and Korea and of endless empty threats against Serbia itself—had no deterrent credibility.

Hence Plan B, a war that NATO backed into. As John Keegan has put it, "They just shut their eyes and hoped." But the war did not paralyze the Serbs and prevent the humanitarian catastrophe because the allies eschewed overwhelming force. The campaign launched was feckless and tentative. It was begun as an Iraq-style pinprick operation with much fireworks and bombast but to no real effect. The first weeks of the campaign, the time of the worst massacres and mass expulsions of Kosovar Albanians, were essentially an exercise in bombing empty buildings.

NATO might have stopped or prevented the ethnic cleansing if it had turned out the lights in Belgrade on Day One. Indeed, in the end it was the massive attack on civilian infrastructure in Serbia proper that forced Milosevic's surrender. But that level of escalation was not achieved until the forty-first day. It had all begun not with bridges and power grids but

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with the judicious taking out of headquarter buildings, at night, when empty. The war was not won until NATO went from symbolic to strategic bombing. And by then, the original war aim—protection of the Kosovar Albanians—had been irretrievably lost.

ALL THIS IS TRUE, yet it must be reconciled with another truth: Bill Clinton is a politician with far better political antennae and notions of what the public will bear than his critics. The central irony of the Kosovo campaign is that for all of its failures, Clinton and his cohorts chose the means most appropriate to humanitarian warfare.

It is Clinton's lasting legacy to have established the rules of humanitarian intervention. After all, his administration has engaged in it both uniquely and exclusively. Uniquely, because no other U.S. administration has undertaken humanitarian interventions (with one exception: the Bush administration in its dying days entering Somalia). And exclusively, because Clinton has done nothing but humanitarian interventions (if we, rightly, consider his spasmodic bomb-dropping in Iraq, Afghanistan and, quite bizarrely, Sudan as both militarily unserious and often politically motivated).

Kosovo was not the first purely humanitarian action by the United States. But it probably qualifies as the first purely humanitarian war. It was preceded, of course, by the escalation in Somalia, the pseudo-invasion of Haiti and the occupation of Bosnia, quintessential humanitarian endeavors in which an American national interest is hard to find. But none of these involved the kind of military campaign launched in Kosovo.

In all of these, Clinton set the standard for humanitarian intervention, and, in doing so, demonstrated that so problematic an enterprise—war in the absence of a serious national interest—must necessarily generate internally contradictory rules. And the central contradiction—the Iron Law of Humanitarian War—is this: *Humanitarian war requires means that are inherently inadequate to its ends.* This contradiction, on starkest display in Kosovo, establishes humanitarian war as an idea with a brief past and very little future.

Critics have derided the means used by NATO in Kosovo as "immaculate coercion." And indeed the war began that way. The idea was this: no one dies on our side, no one dies on the other side. This war on empty buildings began as a kind of demonstration.

Clinton miscalculated the effect of such a bloodless demonstration on the bloody-minded Milosevic. But Clinton did not miscalculate its effect on his blood-averse public at home. He understood that (1) humanitarian warfare is a different enterprise from self-interested or defensive war, (2) it can only be carried out with sustained political support at home, and (3) political support can only be sustained at home if the war is bloodless.

Clinton originally tried for bilateral bloodlessness, as practiced in Haiti and Bosnia: No dead bodies on CNN of any type. When it became clear that these means would not achieve the end—that indeed they had subverted the end of protecting the Kosovar Albanians who were now being terrorized and expelled—he finally acceded to General Clark's request for a far wider and bloodier campaign.

It was a risky strategy. Had it gone on for much longer it would have failed. Western publics were struck by the inherent contradiction between fighting a war for purely moral reasons and seeing pictures on television every night of innocent civilian death *that we had caused.* In fact, without the counter-stories (of suffering ethnic Albanians), Western revulsion at the sight of "collateral" civilian damage would have brought the NATO campaign to an early and ignominious close.

The more profound calculation, however, regarded the other rule of humanitarian warfare—no one dies on our side. One can be somewhat flexible about no one dying on the other side, but the first rule is sacrosanct. It is why Clinton would not countenance a ground attack, would not allow our pilots to fly below fifteen thousand feet, would not even allow air

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drops to the internally displaced Albanian refugees—whose welfare was the ostensible object of our campaign in the first place—lest a single allied, and in particular American, soldier die. The vast media coverage of the three American soldiers captured (and the fact that their troubles earned them six medals each) indicates how extreme is the sensitivity of Western publics to casualties.

THIS IS NOT, as some have argued, a blanket aversion to casualties, stemming variously from a decadence produced by prosperity, or a higher valuation placed on children of the smaller families of a low-fertility West. It is an aversion to casualties incurred purely for the benefit of foreigners. Americans will not very long tolerate the losses and costs of humanitarian intervention. They will, however, tolerate the losses and costs of interventions that serve America's interests.

Before the Gulf War, the American people were told that there might be ten to twenty thousand casualties. There was much debate, yet the Congress approved the war, and the people supported it. They knew there were important strategic interests at stake: the possible loss of the oil resources of the Middle East, the rise of a hostile tyrant on the verge of acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

In Somalia, the American people knew there were no such interests. Yet they supported the intervention initially. No mystery here. Americans will support purely humanitarian interventions at the beginning. Americans, more than the people of any other Great Power, have long believed that foreign policy must be infused with moral purpose, and they are as moved as any people by the plight of others. They will support humanitarian intervention, but when they do they make a bargain with their political leaders: Do it and we will support you, but only if the cost is minimal.

There was thus no significant domestic opposition to the Haiti intervention, which cost no lives. The same was true for Bosnia. Tolerance for the war in Kosovo lasted a good seventy-seven days because, again, no American lives were lost.

Consider Somalia, however. As long as it was a feeding operation, there was popular support. But as soon as it turned to a nation-building operation with real fighting and real losses—eighteen Americans in one day—the game was up. The intervention had to be terminated.

Yet in the Gulf War 146 Americans died. The lesson, learned well by Clinton, was that lives can be spent to secure a major national interest. But the American people will not spend them to allay feelings of pity.

Hence the first reason that humanitarian warfare has no future. It involves a contradiction of means: bloodless war. This constraint does not just jeopardize victory, it actually contradicts the enunciated humanitarian ends. NATO commanders admitted from the very beginning that bombing from great heights was no way to protect the civilian population of Kosovo. Indeed, it exposed them not only to the unrestrained savagery of their armed enemies on the ground, but to the occasional mistaken high explosive from their benefactors in the air.

Bloodlessness also prolongs a war. In the end that constraint had to be abandoned; we had to begin truly pulverizing Serbia to achieve the kind of victory that we did. But even then it was problematic. It was always a race between eroding Western support for a bombing campaign that was producing civilian Serb casualties and Milosevic's will to hold out. In the end, Western morale lasted longer. But it was a close-run thing and entirely unpredictable. Indeed, the issue was in doubt among the allies to the very last minute. More important, it will be in doubt in the next campaign, if it ever comes. Which is why it is hard to see any rational Western leader wanting to repeat the Kosovo experience.

BUT THAT reluctance is not just a matter of means. It is a matter of ends too. Why are we engaged in this kind of war in the first place? Because, as the President put it in a succinct summation of

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the Clinton Doctrine, "I want us to live in a world where we get along with each other, with all of our differences, and where we don't have to worry about seeing scenes every night for the next forty years of ethnic cleansing in some part of the world." This is foreign policy in service of Rodney King and his famous question (posed during the Los Angeles riots): "Can't we all get along?"

The basic aim of humanitarian intervention—from Somalia to Haiti to Kosovo—is to heal the rifts in a society—ethnic, class, partisan, tribal. Can it be done by the armed intervention of outsiders? Well, if we bulldoze the place—flatten it, destroy it, occupy it, as we did Germany and Japan in World War II—we can certainly reshape it and remake it in our image. But that is hardly what humanitarian interventions are meant to do. They are meant to halt the bloodletting, freeze the situation in place, mediate between the parties, and attempt a reconciliation. The logical end of all humanitarian intervention is peacekeeping. And the lesson of the last half century is that peacekeeping works if the parties have had enough and merely want an outsider to provide reassurance—Sinai is the classic example—but that peacekeeping in the absence of these conditions is an exercise in futility.

Look only at Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia. Madeleine Albright wrote passionately (*New York Times*, August 10, 1993) that we should stay in Somalia and "nation-build" to turn it from a failed state into a functioning state. It was a fool's errand. Eight months after she penned that manifesto, we departed the place. Neither with us nor in the intervening six years without us has Somalia emerged from its state of nature.

Next on our reconstruction list was Haiti, to which we were going to bring democracy. We came, we saw, we sat. We will soon be leaving Haiti as it was when we arrived: a violent, unstable, squalid dictatorship. Parliament, such as it is, has been dissolved. The president rules by decree. Death squads are active. The futility of the enterprise was best expressed last February by the American commander in the region. In secret testimony before the Defense Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, General Charles Wilhelm recommended that we just get our remaining forces out. He admitted that the ultimate objective of the American troops is simply not getting shot. As General Wilhelm put it, "force protection is job one." But that is as insane a purpose as sending American Marines in 1982 to sit in Beirut airport. If we are not sending the military to pacify, control and remake countries, as we did after the Second World War, why in God's name are we there? If "force protection is job one", it is a job best done at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

And then Bosnia. Yes, we stopped the bloodletting and there is much to be said for that. But everyone knows that the unitary Bosnian state that we pretended to create in the Dayton Accord is a fiction. What we have is a ceasefire in place and a tripartite partition. The situation remains so unstable that although we were supposed to leave after a year, we have been there for five and will be there indefinitely, at the cost now of eleven billion dollars and counting. Why? Because we believe, accurately, that if we leave, the war will simply resume where it left off. Our presence will have been a parenthesis.

The American military cannot be an international gendarmerie, but that is exactly what it is in Haiti, Bosnia and now Kosovo. In Kosovo, we finally won. And our reward? We get to occupy that province—pacify the Albanians, protect the Serbs, and, as Clinton just promised in the recent Sarajevo conference, reconstruct and democratize the entire Balkans.

This project will make us nostalgic for Somalia. It is another fool's errand: the endless occupation of a murderous neighborhood in pursuit of utopian objectives of the most peripheral strategic interest to the United States.

This is what happens in humanitarian war when you *win*. Which is why there will be no more of it. It is an idea whose time has come, and gone. □

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For the Record

Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz

THROUGH inept diplomacy and strategic miscalculation, the Clinton administration bears much of the responsibility for Kosovo's humanitarian crisis and for the Kosovo Liberation Army's (KLA) subsequent emergence as the dominant political force in Kosovo. Naturally, the administration has denied that its policies have had these adverse consequences, and it has been especially sensitive to the charge that its actions were in any way connected with the mass exodus of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. Given the scale of the catastrophe in Kosovo, the Clinton administration's defensiveness is understandable. But despite its efforts at spin and "perception management", the facts are clear. As the great baseball manager Casey Stengel once said, "You could look it up."

The historical background of the Kosovo crisis is complex, but the immediate cause of the Kosovo war is readily identifiable: the irreconcilable aims of Serbia and the province's ethnic Albanians. Constituting the overwhelming majority of the province's population, Kosovo's ethnic Albanians invoked the principle of national self-determination and sought complete independence from Serbia. The Serbs, invoking the principle of national sovereignty, rejected an independent Kosovo because the province has deep historical and cultural significance to them.

In 1998, frustrated by the failure of nonviolent political methods to advance the cause of Kosovo's independence, the KLA emerged on the scene. As a classic armed national liberation movement, the KLA was committed to gaining independence for Kosovo by waging guerilla war against Serbia. It attacked Serbian police, assassinated Serbian officials in Kosovo, and targeted various government buildings and installations.[1] The Serb response—a brutal military crackdown on KLA strongholds in rural Kosovo—added more fuel to a spiral of rising violence. In October of that same year, fearing that the conflict could spill over and destabilize the Balkans, the United States and NATO used the threat of air strikes to compel Belgrade to withdraw troops from Kosovo and accept an internationally monitored ceasefire.

Three aspects of the process leading to that ceasefire are noteworthy. First, notwithstanding that Yugoslavia was engaged in an insurgency against secessionist rebels on its

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[1]On the growing insurgency in Kosovo in early 1998, see Chris Hedges, "In New Balkan Tinderbox, Ethnic Albanians Rebel Against Serbs", *New York Times*, March 2, 1998; Hedges, "Ravaged Kosovo Village Tells of a Nightmare of Death", *New York Times*, March 9, 1998; and Tracy Wilkinson, "Kosovo's Rebels Are Armed and Ready", *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1998.

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own territory, the United States blamed Belgrade alone for the violence in Kosovo, and Washington's military threats were directed only at Yugoslavia. This underscored a serious inconsistency in Washington's policy: while opposing ethnic Albanian demands for independence, the United States also opposed Yugoslavia's efforts to suppress the KLA insurgency. Second, the KLA proved openly hostile to the ceasefire, as a cessation of hostilities did not further its aim of independence. Third, as soon as Yugoslav forces began withdrawing in accordance with the ceasefire, KLA forces immediately moved to reoccupy the territory they had lost during the Serb offensive.[2] The KLA also used the respite to reconstitute its fighting power. Thus, the familiar pattern of guerilla war once again set in: insurgent attacks provoked Serb reprisals, which prompted further insurgent attacks and an escalation of the fighting.

In January 1999 Yugoslav forces embarked upon a renewed assault against KLA strongholds. The war in Kosovo prior to the March 1999 NATO bombing was a particularly brutal form of modern conflict, a counterinsurgency effort against a guerilla force. In counterinsurgencies, civilians inescapably become targets because the guerillas draw their manpower, material sustenance and political support from the population in whose name they fight. Insurgent forces often deliberately provoke the authorities into harsh reprisals against civilians to weaken support for the counterinsurgency, and to gain outside sympathy and support for their cause. From early 1998 until the commencement of the NATO bombing in March 1999, the KLA deliberately attempted to provoke Serb repression—and, true to form, Belgrade's regime responded as the KLA hoped it would. In early 1999 the U.S. intelligence community apprised the Clinton administration of the game the KLA was playing. The administration nevertheless decided that the Serbs bore full responsibility for the fighting, while implicitly absolving the KLA.

The unraveling of the ceasefire heightened U.S. and West European concerns that the fighting could lead to a humanitarian tragedy, and that it could spread to Albania and Macedonia, thereby destabilizing the Balkans. These fears led to the Rambouillet negotiations.

Rambouillet

AT THE Rambouillet meetings, the aim of the United States and its West European allies was to fashion a peace agreement between Belgrade and the KLA. Rambouillet called for: (1) withdrawal of Yugoslav military and paramilitary forces from Kosovo; (2) the restoration of Kosovo's political autonomy; (3) a three-year transitional period, at the end of which there would be a referendum on Kosovo's future; (4) disarmament of the KLA; and (5) deployment of an armed NATO peacekeeping force in Yugoslavia.

After two weeks, however, the Rambouillet talks were at an impasse, with both Belgrade and the KLA refusing to sign the accord. The KLA refused to sign because, in determining Kosovo's future status, Washington and the Western Europeans had agreed only to "consider" the results of the referendum. This complicated the administration's strategy of coercing Yugoslav acquiescence, and, as the *New York Times* reported, "flabbergasted" the Clinton team. Indeed, the administration spent the better part of the recess in the talks cajoling the KLA to sign. To

[2]Paul Watson, "Rebels Moving in on Kosovo as Serbian Forces Pull Back", *Los Angeles Times*, October 18, 1998.

[3]Jane Perlez, "Kosovo Albanians, in Reversal, Say They Will Sign Peace Pact", *New York Times*, February 24, 1999; Carlotta Gall, "Envoys Push for Talks as Kosovo Fights On", *New York Times*, March 6, 1999; Philip Shenon, "U.S. Says Kosovo Rebels Are Ready to Sign Peace Pact", *New York Times*, March 9, 1999; Gall, "U.S. Official Sees 'Collision Course' in Kosovo", *New York Times*, March 10, 1999; Craig R. Whitney, "In New Talks on Kosovo, NATO's Credibility is At Stake", *New York Times*, March 14, 1999.

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gain its assent, U.S. officials reminded the KLA that unless it signed the Rambouillet pact the alliance would be unable to implement its threat to bomb Serbia.[3] In the end, of course, the KLA was persuaded to accede to the accord, while Belgrade refused to do so.

Belgrade declined for two reasons. First, it believed that Rambouillet favored the KLA. Although the plan stipulated that Kosovo would remain nominally under the control of Belgrade for three years, in effect Yugoslavia's authority over the province would have been reduced to a nullity. While the United States and NATO did not explicitly specify Kosovo's status at the end of the transition period, the KLA made it quite clear what would happen: either Kosovo would become independent, or the KLA would resume combat operations. Indeed, even as they agreed to sign the Rambouillet accord, KLA officials voiced their intent to ignore its disarmament provisions and to keep their own military capabilities intact.[4] Second, Belgrade believed that the provision that required it to accept the presence of NATO peacekeeping soldiers in Kosovo—and, even more important, the provision permitting NATO to deploy its forces not only in Kosovo but *anywhere* in Yugoslavia—infringed on Yugoslav sovereignty.

The United States did not play the role of an impartial mediator at Rambouillet. At no time during the process did the Clinton administration ever threaten to take military action against the KLA if *it* caused the talks to break down. On the contrary, the United States was remarkably vague in spelling out any actions it might take against the KLA.[5] Thus, when the Rambouillet process collapsed and the air campaign began, administration officials—including President Clinton himself—quickly blamed the conflict on Belgrade's intransigence. The Yugoslavs, it was asserted, failed to accept the "just peace" on the table.

But at Rambouillet, the United States and the Western Europeans had not been negotiating with Belgrade at all: Belgrade was presented with an ultimatum, and given the choice of accepting it or being bombed. This was repeatedly underscored by administration officials, including President Clinton and Secretary Albright.[6]

U.S. policy at Rambouillet was fatally flawed not only because of this bias; it also reflected ignorance of Serbian history, nationalism and resolve. And it showed a culpable neglect of the foreseeable consequences of carrying out the alliance's military threat.

NATO's Air Campaign and Its Consequences

WITH THE KLA's signature in hand and Belgrade's refusal to sign on to the Rambouillet accord, the United States and NATO promptly followed through on their threat to bomb Yugoslavia, ostensibly to compel Belgrade to reconsider its position and to accept Rambouillet, but also to deter the Yugoslavs from expelling ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. Yet the bombing campaign was based on serious miscalculations about its effect on the Serbs, and its effect on events on the ground in Kosovo.

As Clinton himself later admitted during his June 25, 1999 press conference, he and his foreign policy advisers expected that the Rambouillet process would result in one of

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[4]Steven Erlanger, "Among Rebels' Officer-Trainees, No Sign Kosovo Fighting is Over", *New York Times*, February 18, 1999.

[5]The United States made vague threats to withdraw its support from the KLA, and thereby make it more difficult for the KLA to obtain arms. This was essentially a hollow threat. The KLA was well financed by the ethnic Albanian diaspora in North America and Western Europe, and hence able to purchase arms overtly or covertly from the international arms market. Moreover, Albania itself was awash in weapons, many of which ended up in the KLA's hands.

[6]Paul Watson and Tyler Marshall, "U.S. Steps Up Pressure on Milosevic", *Los Angeles Times*, February 19, 1999; Elizabeth Becker, "No 'Stonewalling' on Kosovo Peace, Milosevic Is Told", *New York Times*, February 20, 1999.

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two outcomes. In all likelihood, U.S. officials believed, Belgrade would bow to American and NATO threats and sign the Rambouillet accord. But if it refused to do so, Belgrade would quickly change its mind after NATO conducted a brief "demonstration" bombing campaign. Reflecting the prevailing view within the administration, Secretary of State Albright declared on March 24—the first night of hostilities—"I don't see this as a long-term operation."[7] Yet, just eleven days later, confronted with the failure of the NATO bombing to force Belgrade to back down, Albright, switching to the new administration line without missing a beat, now claimed that, "We never expected this to be over quickly."[8] But the administration's claims that it anticipated the subsequent and massive refugee flows, and that it expected a prolonged air campaign, were belied by its inability to cope with the refugees and by the hasty improvisation that marked the bombing effort. Simply put, the Clinton administration was unprepared to manage the very consequences it retrospectively claims to have foreseen.

In believing that either the threat of air strikes or a token bombing campaign would force Belgrade to submit quickly, the Clinton administration clearly erred. But, equally important, it failed to foresee the air campaign's consequences. On March 20 President Clinton said that unless Belgrade agreed to the Rambouillet accord, NATO would use air power to prevent Serb atrocities against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo:

> Make no mistake, if we and our allies do not have the will to act, there will be more massacres. In dealing with aggressors in the Balkans, hesitation is a license to kill. But action and resolve save lives.[9]

When Clinton spoke these words, there was in fact no large-scale campaign being mounted against Kosovo's ethnic Albanians by the Yugoslav Army. The forced mass expulsion of ethnic Albanians from the province, and the reports of widespread atrocities, did not occur until *after* NATO commenced its air campaign. And, indeed, both the Pentagon and the U.S. intelligence community had warned the Clinton foreign policy team that Belgrade would respond to NATO air strikes by expelling Kosovo's ethnic Albanians from the province, and that the bombing campaign would not be able to prevent the Yugoslav Army from doing so.[10]

BELGRADE apparently had devised a contingency plan prior to the bombing—Operation Horseshoe—to drive the ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo, and had made preparations to implement it.[11] Planning, however, is one thing, implementation another. (NATO, for its part, began planning for possible military action against the Serbs as early as the summer of 1998.) Assuming that Belgrade had indeed wanted to turn plans into action prior to March 24, the mere presence of West European civilian monitors on the ground in Kosovo had been enough to restrain it from doing so. Clearly there was violence ongoing in Kosovo prior to the commencement of NATO's air campaign. But the operations of the Yugoslav Army up to that point were directed mainly at rooting out the KLA, not at forcibly

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[7]"Interview with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright", *Online Newshour*, March 24, 1999.

[8]Quoted in Doyle McManus, "Debate Turns to Finger-Pointing on Kosovo Policy", *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 1999.

[9]Quoted in John M. Broder, "Clinton Says Force is Needed to Halt Kosovo Bloodshed", *New York Times*, March 20, 1999.

[10]Craig R. Whitney and Eric Schmitt, "NATO Had Signs Its Strategy Would Fail in Kosovo", *New York Times*, April 1, 1999; Jane Perlez, "Unpalatable U.S. Options", *New York Times*, March 23, 1999.

[11]R. Jeffrey Smith and William Drozdiak, "A Blueprint for War: The Serbs' Military Campaign was Meticulously Planned Months Ago", *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, April 19, 1999.

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expelling ethnic Albanians from the province.[12]

The Serbs' pre-bombing offensive in Kosovo was a response to KLA actions, "including the ambushing of Serbian police patrols and officials by Albanians and several instances of the kidnapping and killing of Serbian civilians."[13] Certainly, Serbia's campaign against the KLA was harsh. Although Belgrade's objective at that point was not to expel ethnic Albanians from Kosovo, it did seek to remove them from KLA strongholds and thereby deprive the KLA of its base of support.

But once the bombing began, the Serb campaign in Kosovo intensified markedly and its objectives shifted. That campaign had an immediate military objective:

> By expelling ethnic Albanians from Kosovo, Serbian forces aimed to restrict the guerillas' base of support and cover. By controlling the borders and the devastated corridors along the major highways, the Serbs planned to isolate and then eradicate the Kosovo Liberation Army in the forests and mountains.[14]

Their goal was "depopulation rather than extermination."[15] Indeed, students of "low-intensity" conflict will recognize the similarities between the counterinsurgency tactics of the Serbs in Kosovo and those of the French in Algeria, the British in the Boer War and the Americans in the Philippines.

It is certainly true that civilians died in Kosovo both before and after the NATO bombing. It is widely agreed by Western sources that from the beginning of 1998 until the air campaign started on March 24—a period of fifteen months—approximately 1,800 civilians died in Kosovo as a result of the fighting and of deliberate massacres. The *New York Times* estimated that 4,600 ethnic Albanians were killed in Kosovo by Serb forces from the time NATO commenced bombing through late May.[16] After the Serbs were driven from Kosovo, the number of ethnic Albanian civilian dead was revised sharply upward. Relying on both refugee accounts and undisclosed intelligence sources, the British government has put the figure of ethnic Albanian dead at ten thousand. The initial UN figure is eleven thousand. However, the UN administrator for Kosovo, Bernard Kouchner, has qualified this by noting that the figure is only an estimate, and has not been verified. And while the brutality of the Serbs' actions deserves severe condemnation, it is nevertheless a fact that they were not unusual in the context of guerilla war, and that they did not amount to anything remotely approaching the "genocide" repeatedly alleged by U.S. and NATO officials. Yet even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Clinton continues to charge that the Serbs engaged in genocide and killed "tens of thousands" of ethnic Albanians.

In characterizing the nature of the conflict in Kosovo this way, the Clinton administration was—and remains—less than candid. But more than a simple lack of candor is involved in its vehement insistence that NATO's actions have had nothing at all to do with the stampede of ethnic Albanian refugees who have fled Kosovo to neighboring Macedonia and Albania (most as a result of Serb behavior, but many to escape NATO bombs).

Again, the most authoritative accounts now available make it clear that ethnic cleansing—that is, the forced mass expulsion from Kosovo of ethnic Albanians—did not begin until after NATO's bombing campaign commenced. This is not to say that there were no refugees *inside* Kosovo before the NATO air campaign began. Because of intense fighting between the KLA and the Yugoslav Army dur-

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[12]Carlotta Gall, "Flood of Refugees Tries to Get Away From Serb Offensive", *New York Times*, March 20, 1999; Gall, "Thousands in Kosovo Flee Serb Drive", *New York Times*, March 21, 1999.

[13]John Kifner, "The Ravaging of Kosovo", *New York Times*, May 29, 1999.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

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ing the summer and early fall of 1998, it is estimated that there were between 300,000 and 443,000 displaced persons inside the province just prior to the bombing.[17] On March 20, 1999 the *New York Times* reported that since March 14, an additional 20,000 Albanian refugees had fled their homes because of Yugoslav Army operations against KLA strongholds.

THE EVENT that opened the door for the Yugoslav forces to move from counterinsurgency to population expulsion was the withdrawal of the 1,380 OSCE monitors who were deployed in Kosovo as part of the October 1998 ceasefire. As one monitor explained on March 19, "There is a lot of tension in the area. But while [the monitors] stay where they are, things are more or less okay."[18] But the monitors were ordered to withdraw just a few hours later, to ensure they would be out of harm's way when the bombing campaign began. This despite the fact that the Clinton administration was told—by among others William Walker, the top U.S. diplomat on the scene in Kosovo—that Belgrade would regard their withdrawal as a green light to proceed with its plan to expel ethnic Albanians.[19]

In the interval between the monitors' withdrawal and commencement of the air campaign, the Yugoslav forces stepped up their offensive against the KLA. At that stage, however, they were still not engaged in a deliberate ethnic cleansing campaign. Indeed, just two days before it launched air strikes, NATO asked the KLA to desist from further terrorist attacks against Serbs in Kosovo so as not to give Belgrade a pretext to engage in such a campaign.[20] On the day the bombing began and in the days that immediately followed, ethnic Albanians in Kosovo expressed fears that NATO action would trigger an upsurge in Serb depredations.[21] These fears proved justified.

It was not until the air campaign had been under way for several days that the first reports of forced expulsions and large-scale atrocities began to surface.[22] On March 28, in response to the refugee flows, NATO announced a switch in its bombing strategy, with the aim of halting the expulsions: a shift from attacks on Yugoslavia's air defenses to attacks on Yugoslav units on the ground in Kosovo.[23]

The administration's denials notwithstanding, the record is clear: not until NATO began its bombing did Belgrade's objective in Kosovo change from counterinsurgency to a deliberate campaign to expel the province's ethnic Albanians. The State Department has, perhaps inadvertently, conceded this point. As its report, released in May 1999, on alleged atrocities in Kosovo admits:

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[17]Paul Watson, "Kosovo Hit By Terrorist Blast on Eve of New Talks", *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1999 (300,000); Michael R. Gordon and Tom Shanker, "How Yugoslav Military Planned and Mounted Kosovo's Ravaging", *New York Times*, May 29, 1999 (approximately 400,000).

[18]Quoted in Gall, "Flood of Refugees."

[19]Gall, "Flood of Refugees"; Whitney and Schmitt, "NATO Had Signs"; Perlez, "Unpalatable U.S. Options"; Paul Watson, "Monitors' Exit From Kosovo Brings Fears of Blood Bath", *Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1999.

[20]Steven Erlanger, "U.S. Issues Appeal to Serbs to Halt Attack in Kosovo", *New York Times*, March 23, 1999.

[21]Carlotta Gall, "With Flash in Sky, Kosovars Fear Ground Fighting", *New York Times*, March 25, 1999; Gall, "Ethnic Albanians Now Fear Wrath of Serbs", *New York Times*, March 26, 1999.

[22]Paul Watson, "Airstrikes May Be Triggering New Massacres", *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1999; Jane Perlez, "White House Tells of Reports of a Forced March in Kosovo", *New York Times*, March 27, 1999; Perlez, "U.S. Stealth Fighter Is Down in Yugoslavia as NATO Orders Attack on Serb Army Units: 'Ethnic Cleansing'", *New York Times*, March 28, 1999.

[23]Eric Schmitt, "NATO's Claim of New Focus is Challenged", *New York Times*, March 28, 1999; R.W. Apple, Jr., "Bombs Fall, Goals Unmet?", *New York Times*, March 28, 1999.

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Since the withdrawal of the KVM [the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission monitors] on March 19, 1999, Serbian military, paramilitary, and police forces in Kosovo have committed a wide range of war crimes against humanity, and other violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

In late March 1999, *Serbian forces dramatically increased the scope and pace of their efforts*, moving away from selective targeting of towns and regions suspected of KLA sympathies towards a sustained and systematic effort to ethnically cleanse the entire province of Kosovo [emphasis added].[24]

On March 25, President Clinton had declared: "Our purpose is to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe or a wider war."[25] But NATO's air campaign undoubtedly contributed significantly to the very tragedy it was intended to prevent. Policymakers are responsible for the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their actions. Their policies must be judged by their consequences, not their intentions. As with so many of his claims, President Clinton's assertion that the United States did "the right thing, and in the right way" to prevent a humanitarian tragedy in Kosovo is specious and unsustainable. □

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[24]United States Department of State, "Erasing History: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo", www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/rpt_9905_ethnic_ksvo_toc.html.

[25]John-Thor Dahlburg and Paul Richter, "2nd Wave of Allied Firepower Pounds Yugoslavia; Serbs Continue Assaults", *Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 1999.

> The Kosovo war was not fought for conventional reasons of national interest, nor yet was it quite the humanitarian venture that western leaders proclaimed it to be. Rather it was a war they stumbled into by miscalculation when their diplomacy failed; it then became not just a war to end Serb injustice, but also a war to preserve NATO's credibility. Next time, it must be hoped, the West will either be less free with its threats of force, or make sure it can live up to them. But, for a while at least, an overstretched NATO will be in no position to undertake more interventions of the Balkan kind.
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> —*The Economist*, July 31, 1999

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The Future of Nationalism

Michael Mandelbaum

THE GREAT question at the heart of nineteenth-century European politics was who should govern—the princes or the people? The question was settled by World War I, which swept away the Continent's dynastic monarchs and their empires, only to give rise to another: just how are the people to govern—through elected representatives whose powers are limited, or through self-appointed political elites exercising total control over those they rule? In the wake of World War II and the Cold War, totalitarianism in Europe has been vanquished, leaving, however, yet a third question, one that underlies the large-scale violence that has followed the collapse of communism and the end of the East-West rivalry on the Continent: Who, for the purposes of self-government, *are* the people?

This is a matter of maps. Government requires a state. A state must have borders. A method for determining them is therefore needed.

The issue is not a new one. The nineteenth century knew it as the national question. It stemmed, then as now, from the quest of self-identified nations for their own states. To the question "who are the people?", the answer then seemed obvious: a few great nations—the German, the Italian, the Hungarian and the Polish—imprisoned in autocratic multinational empires. Once the empires were destroyed, they would take their places in the company of the British, the French and the Russians as the peoples entitled to govern themselves in sovereign states. In the twentieth century, however, Europe discovered that the matter was not so simple. The empires were indeed destroyed, but in their wake came not few but many claims to sovereignty, claims that were both overlapping and conflicting. How were they to be adjudicated?

First Europe and then the world embraced two rules for deciding the location of borders. One is the principle of national self-determination, the rule that every self-identified nation should have its own sovereign state. The other is the principle that existing sovereign borders are sacrosanct and should not be altered. The two are not always compatible. Often they are in conflict. The conflict between them was submerged during the Cold War but has resurfaced in its wake. That conflict lay at the heart of the wars in the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, and the fighting between Armenians and Azeris, Georgians and Abkhaz, and Russians and Chechens on the territory of the former Soviet Union. In each case, one side went to war to change borders in order to make them conform more closely to the principle of national self-determination, while the other fought to retain existing borders.

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The twentieth-century history of the conflict between the two principles for determining borders is one of alternation and compromise, accompanied by surprisingly little debate about their respective merits. The lesson of that history for the twenty-first century is that, although Europe—and the world—would be better able to manage and prevent conflict if one or the other principle were firmly established as the unchallenged international norm, this is not possible. Both are rooted in history and logic; neither can be entirely eliminated. The prospects for resolving twenty-first century national conflicts—both in Europe and the rest of the world—depend on finding compromises between the two. The late twentieth-century history of the national question, including the war in Kosovo, shows how difficult this is.

Changing Norms

THE TWENTIETH century saw three great bursts of state-creation, occasioned by the demise of three sets of empires: the dynastic ones of Central and Eastern Europe after World War I, the overseas empires of Western Europe after World War II, and the communist empires in Europe after the Cold War. In the wake of each upheaval there was a change in the international norm governing the determination of borders.

Until the twentieth century, borders were set by Europe's dynastic rulers on the basis of military might. Blood and iron determined where one ruler's domain ended and another's began. The empires governed by the Habsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, the Romanovs and the Ottoman Turks were as large as their rulers' power could make them. When they fought each other, the winners gained territory at the expense of the losers. Indeed, the quest for expanded territory was an important reason for going to war in the first place.

This norm changed at the end of World War I, in the first of the major twentieth-century shifts. The Paris Peace Conference that convened in 1919 proclaimed that the allocation of sovereignty would be based on justice, defined as the fulfillment of national aspirations. Borders were to be drawn so as to put people of the same nationality in a single sovereign political unit. But this requirement was not entirely fulfilled, nor could it have been. In some areas national populations—Hungarians and Romanians, for example, in what had been Hungary and would become Romania—were intermingled.

The post-World War I settlement had important elements of continuity with the imperial past. The Great Powers retained the prerogative of deciding where borders were to be drawn, and they ignored the precept of national self-determination when this suited their purposes. The Bolsheviks were able to incorporate many different national groups into their new Soviet state because they had won the power to do so on the battlefield. The Germans were scattered among several different states because defeat had deprived them of the power to prevent it. The Great Power prerogative was still in force after World War II, although the changes of boundaries were more modest. Stalin moved the borders of the Soviet Union westward, into what had been Poland, and simultaneously moved the Polish border westward as well, placing lands that had been ethnically German for centuries within the Polish state.

So it was not World War II but rather the second period of twentieth-century state-creation—the one triggered by the end of the West European empires in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean in the three decades after World War II—that raised the concept of the inviolability of existing borders to an international norm. This second stage of imperial dissolution multiplied the number of sovereign states. When the United Nations was founded in 1945, it had 50 members. By 1999 its membership had grown to 185.

The European-imposed borders in Asia and Africa were deemed immutable precisely *because* there were so many of them that were

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so arbitrarily drawn. They included so many different groups that had not previously been part of the same political unit (and also divided several that had) that without the norm of inviolability all would have been subject to challenge; and once challenged there would have been no widely shared concept, no legitimate principle, no viable formula on the basis of which they could be redrawn peacefully. The alternative to the preservation of all existing borders, no matter how capriciously or even mischievously established, seemed to be widespread chaos, violence and bloodshed.[1]

This norm of inviolability was bolstered by the Cold War. The United States and the Soviet Union worried that trying to change existing borders had the potential for creating conflicts into which they could be drawn, with conceivably disastrous consequences. For that reason, and because they competed for the allegiance of third countries around the world, both Washington and Moscow supplied arms and money that weak Third World governments of dubious legitimacy used to retain power over their recognized territories.

The rule of inviolability was on vivid display in West Africa at the outset of the 1970s. The Ibos of eastern Nigeria, resentful of the domination of the country by the Muslim Hausas of the north and the Yoruba of the west, tried to secede. The federal government of Nigeria crushed the secession in a bloody civil war. Only a few countries, and none outside Africa, supported the Ibo cause.

Just as the national principle of the post-World War I period was not faithfully applied in the post-colonial era, however, so the post-colonial commitment to the inviolability of borders was not sustained when communist rule in Europe collapsed. When that happened, the inviolability norm gave way to a third precept for allocating sovereignty and defining borders, a rule that might be called "orderly promotion."

The communist multinational states, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, collapsed in part because, unlike the multinational states of the Third World during the Cold War, the West would not, and the East could not, support them. Upon their collapse, the world recognized as sovereign the next-largest subordinate administrative units of both countries: the six constituent republics of the former Yugoslavia and the fifteen constituent republics of the former Soviet Union.

This new method of creating sovereign states was neither formally proclaimed nor systematically debated. It was a compromise between the difficulty, and from many points of view the undesirability, of keeping communist multinational states intact, on the one hand, and, on the other, the need for as consistent a principle of sovereignty as possible so as to minimize the disruption and violence that a revision of borders would surely provoke.

This kept the maps of post-communist Europe relatively orderly. The thick black lines marking off the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia disappeared; the dotted lines that had denoted their constituent republics were thickened in recognition of their newly bestowed sovereignty. But if the maps were preserved, the politics were transformed. Peoples who had been part of political majorities became minorities, and vice-versa, leading in some places to violence on a large scale.

Thus, neither national self-determination nor the sanctity of existing sovereign borders has been fully embraced or definitively dismissed. Nor is it feasible for either principle entirely to displace the other.

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[1]There was another motive. What is called the international community is, among other things, a trade association of governments. Each has an interest in preserving its own prerogatives, and so is disposed to protect the prerogatives of the others. To put it differently, the international community may be seen as a cartel, the members of which seek to ration, so as to preserve the value of, their common product: sovereignty.

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The Impossibility of Consistency

IN THE TWENTIETH century, nationalism as a principle for allocating sovereignty has received unfavorable reviews from both scholars and diplomats—and for good reason. It is, in the first place, impossible to apply consistently because it is impossible to define clearly. There is no single definition of a nation that can serve as the basis for determining where state borders should be drawn. Language is a rough but not a foolproof standard. Serbs and Croats can conduct disputes with each other from their separate states using the same language; united India, by contrast, contains seventeen different major languages. Religion is often but not always germane. Protestants and Catholics are both loyal Germans; but a common Islamic faith did not keep Bengalis from seceding from Pakistan.

The most nearly viable definition of a nation turns out to be a tautology: nations are groups that believe they are nations and mobilize themselves to secure their own state. But even that definition can give an erroneous impression of how some contemporary states have become sovereign, especially in the post-communist period. The successor states of the Soviet Union in Central Asia, for example, were not created by national movements that wrested power from the Soviet authorities. There was no Uzbek or Kyrgyz national movement, or even much nationalist sentiment worthy of the name, in either place. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the two were, for a variety of reasons, union republics, and so had sovereignty thrust upon them by the principle of orderly promotion.

Even if it were coherent, national self-determination would still, its critics have said, be objectionable in principle, because it stresses a set of similarities within groups as the basis for political organization. It thus automatically places equal, and perverse, emphasis on what divides these groups from others. Nationalism is at once narrow, exclusive and potentially chauvinistic.

And even if it were not incoherent in theory and objectionable in principle, national self-determination would be—indeed has proved to be—unmanageable in practice. Lines of political division that are acceptable to all cannot be drawn on the basis of this principle. During the Paris Peace Conference Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state, Robert Lansing, wrote of self-determination in his diary: "The phrase is loaded with dynamite. It will raise hopes which can never be realized. It will, I fear, cost thousands of lives."[2] So it has. For while it is impossible to draw borders so that every state contains the members of one and only one nation, the principle does permit any self-described nation to claim the right to its own sovereign state.

The boundaries of state and nation can be made to conform by changing not the borders but rather the people living within them. Group identities can be, and have been, altered. Assimilation is a common feature of social life, but it is not a universal one and not one to which all national minorities are attracted. On the contrary, some such minorities—the Hungarians in Romanian Transylvania are one example—actively seek to retain the identities they and their forbears have borne, the languages they have spoken and the homes they have inhabited for centuries.

Alternatively, people can and do move. More or less voluntary—or at least not murderously coerced—migrations have often followed the shift of borders, the creation of new states, and the political division of previously united nations. After World War I, Germans moved to Germany from territories that had long been German but that the postwar settlement had made part of Poland. Similarly, Hungarians left what became diaspora communities for the new, shrunken Hungarian nation-state. In the post-Soviet period, Russian nationals have left Central Asia for Russia. But the twentieth century has also

[2]Quoted in Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 83.

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seen all too many instances of forced population transfer, a process that lately has come to be known, courtesy of the horrors of the former Yugoslavia, as "ethnic cleansing." The international community may not always be able to prevent this practice, but it can hardly accept it as a legitimate tool of statecraft.

Yet self-determination cannot be discarded. National self-consciousness is a powerful fact of contemporary international life. The cement of national solidarity may, as scholars argue, be composed of dubious materials—myths about the past, illusions concerning the future, resentments in the present—but it is no less powerful for that. And national homogeneity has its uses.

A vivid illustration of its potentially soothing effect is to be found in Poland, the largest country in Central Europe. Poland's population is among the most uniform in all of Europe, with virtually all citizens speaking the same language and professing the same faith. National, ethnic and religious conflict is almost entirely absent, in contrast to the Polish experience in the interwar period when one out of every three people living in the country was not a Polish-speaking, Catholic, ethnic Pole.

The method by which Poland became homogeneous—the Nazi murder of its Jews and the eviction of its Germans—can scarcely be commended, and the correlation between national homogeneity and political stability may be spurious. But even if it is not desirable, the principle of national self-determination is unavoidable. As the basis for apportioning sovereignty, it is firmly embedded in international theory and practice. As such, it is self-reinforcing. Every group with a claim to being a nation now believes that that claim brings with it the right to a state. Like the Microsoft operating system for personal computers, once nationalism was established as the world standard, every group seeking the benefits of statehood acquired an interest in professing allegiance to and conformity with it.

Because national self-determination is so well established, it is not possible to enshrine the inviolability of borders as the unchallenged international norm for assigning statehood. A determined national group dissatisfied with the borders within which it lives will press to change them, sometimes resorting to violence on a large scale. This, after all, was the basis for the war in Kosovo in which NATO intervened in March 1999. Such a group will claim that the borders to which it objects are arbitrary and unfair, and such claims almost always contain at least a measure of truth. This is the case even with the borders set by the post-Cold War attempt at a compromise between national self-determination and the inviolability of existing borders—sovereignty was simply conferred on the next-largest unit of the collapsed communist multinational states of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

That attempt turned out to be historically perverse. It meant that everything Lenin, Stalin and Tito did was discredited and discarded *except* the borders they enforced, which were deemed sacrosanct. It meant that Russian-speaking communities in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, although previously part of a Russian-dominated state and although contiguous to post-Soviet Russia, could not choose to belong to it. It meant that Bosnia *had* to be a sovereign state within its Yugoslav borders, despite the fact that the majority of the people living within those borders were violently opposed to this; while Kosovo could *not* be sovereign, despite the fact that the vast majority of its inhabitants desired independence and were increasingly willing to fight for it.

Still, while it cannot always be implemented, neither can the commitment to maintaining existing borders be wholly abandoned in favor of the promise of a sovereign state for every nation. For there are simply too many potential nations. By one estimate, in 1995 there were 184 independent countries, 600 living language groups, and 5,000 distinct ethnic groups.[3] While efforts to enforce the principle of inviolability have led to turbulence and

[3]Will Kymlicka, ed., Introduction to *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 5.

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bloodshed, abandoning that principle altogether would likely produce at least as much turbulence, and perhaps more.

The conflicts between dynastic and popular rule, and between democratic and totalitarian governance, were each settled decisively in favor of one of the two competing principles. The conflict between the twentieth century's two principles for allocating sovereignty—national self-determination and the inviolability of existing borders—will not be. Neither can entirely supplant the other; both will persist into the twenty-first century. Thus, many sovereign states will contain more than one nation, and in some of these states one or more of the nations they contain will be dissatisfied with the way its borders are drawn.

The uneasy coexistence of different nations, or ethnic or tribal groups, within a single state is also a feature of political life outside Europe, even where what is in dispute is not the location of borders but rather the question of which group will control the state: in Rwanda and the Congo in Africa, for example, and in Afghanistan and Iraq in West Asia.

If in the twentieth century international tranquillity depended on peaceful coexistence between and among sovereign states the governments of which rested on different principles of legitimacy, in the twenty-first century it will require peaceful coexistence among nations *within* the same state that embrace different principles for determining sovereignty. In some places—Bosnia and Kosovo, for example—this may not be possible. Over the long term, separation—a division rather than a sharing of sovereignty—may be necessary. But elsewhere the practical problem that the twenty-first century version of the national question raises is how to make this coexistence more peaceful than it has been in the twentieth.

"Consociational Democracies"

A LEADING candidate for easing conflict of all kinds is economic growth. Prosperity is widely regarded as a powerful, all-purpose solvent of every political stain and blight, a miracle drug for social and economic ills. It certainly has some healing properties. Prosperous countries are, all other things being equal, more harmonious than those that are poverty-stricken. When the economic climate turns harsh, minorities, whether or not they have actually contributed to the economic distress, become targets of anger, discrimination and persecution on the part of the majority, something that ethnic Chinese learned when the Asian fiscal crisis struck Indonesia in 1997 and 1998, and that Jews in Europe have had painful, indeed tragic, occasion to know for centuries. From the standpoint of communal harmony, economic activity is beneficial in and of itself because it requires, and therefore fosters, cooperation, including cooperation across national and ethnic divisions.

But while prosperity may erode those divisions, it cannot eradicate the grievances, not all of them economic in character, that cause conflict where different nations inhabit the same state. Moreover, economic growth cannot be produced on demand.

In the post-Cold War period, the political equivalent of prosperity is democracy: something universally desirable if not quite universally desired, a source of all blessings, a necessary part of the public agenda of virtually every sovereign state, new or old. The attitudes and institutions necessary for managing the conflicts within sovereign states are common in the public life of Western democracies but almost nowhere else: tolerance, wide opportunities for effective political participation, and social space for the expression of cultural differences. But Western democracies are *liberal* democracies, which combine the rule of the majority with constitutional and cultural protections for minorities. Liberal or constitutional democracy is a system both for determining how governments are chosen and for limiting what they can and cannot do with the power vested in them. The first feature empowers the majority; the second protects minorities.

It is perfectly possible to have the first without the second, and democracies that are

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illiberal can aggravate rather than reduce national tensions when they lack well-established political institutions and practices. In such states, political competition is intense and nationalism becomes the most promising material out of which to fashion a political appeal. Contenders for power find it advantageous to evoke—or provoke—fears among the majority that their patrimony is being diminished, or subverted, or is otherwise at risk from the minority.[4]

Even the successful establishment of liberal, constitutional democracy may not assure harmony where nations coexist within a single state. The constitutions of the major Western democracies protect the political rights of individuals. What national minorities demand, however, is constitutional protection for groups. In lieu of the partition of territory they seek the partition of sovereignty. Here the appropriate models are the smaller states of Western Europe—Belgium, the Netherlands and Austria—whose constitutional arrangements aim at just such an outcome.

The elaborate form of power-sharing that is practiced in each country has several defining features: close collaboration among the elites of the different groups, often in a single governing "grand coalition" in the national parliament; veto power for each group in areas of importance to it; proportional representation in the parliament and in government employment; and a high degree of autonomy for each group in its own internal affairs.

Such institutions and practices have taken root in a particular kind of political soil, which is not, alas, widely distributed. The "consociational democracies"[5] are small and wealthy. Within their borders values such as tolerance, compromise and non-violence are well established. They are situated in the sunny liberal uplands of the international system. Outside Western Europe this approach to sovereignty has a poor track record: it collapsed after a period of success in Lebanon and was rejected when proposed in Cyprus. The Yugoslavia that failed to survive the Cold War had several of the relevant features. The establishment of consociational democracy is like an organ transplant: a delicate, difficult operation that is likely to succeed only when the recipient is in other ways in robust health.

Nor is the record of success appreciably better when outside powers are charged with protecting the political prerogatives and cultural preferences of national minorities. At the Paris Peace Conference after World War I, minority treaties were drawn up and applied to the new states of Eastern Europe that harbored substantial national minorities. These obliged the signatory governments to accord the minorities the right of collective organization and to respect their distinctive religions and cultures. Violations of the treaties could be appealed to the League of Nations, which in theory was the agent of enforcement. But the League did not enforce the treaties. Britain and France would have had to take responsibility for enforcement, but neither was willing to do so.

The more recent constitution for Bosnia mandated by the Dayton Conference of 1995 resembles consociational arrangements. It provides for a very weak central Bosnian government and reserves major powers to two designated constituent units—the Serb republic and the Muslim-Croat grouping. While NATO troops have been deployed to Bosnia, they have policed a ceasefire rather than enforced the controversial provisions of Dayton, such as apprehending suspected war criminals and ensuring the safe return of refugees to their original homes. Nor has NATO enforced the prerogatives, such as they are, of the central Bosnian government.

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[4]On the two types of democracy, see Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 1997). On the combustible potential of fledgling democracy, see Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War", *International Security* (Summer 1995).

[5]The term is from Arendt Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

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Governments such as those of Britain and France in the interwar period and of the members of NATO after the Cold War were and are generally unprepared either to spend political capital or to suffer casualties on behalf of the accords to which they are party. There is, to be sure, a major difference between the two historical periods: in the first, enforcement was avoided because it was too dangerous. Fearing German revanchism, the West European powers were more interested in maintaining solidarity with the Central European governments against Germany than in protecting national minorities against the depredations of these same governments. In the second, the Western powers have balked at enforcing Dayton's provisions because they face no danger in southeastern Europe and so cannot justify to their publics paying any serious price to police the region.

NATO's 1999 war in Yugoslavia might seem to be an exception, but it is an exception that proves the rule. Outside powers did intervene in the war between the government in Belgrade and the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army. But the Atlantic Alliance adopted military tactics—bombardment from high altitudes—that ensured that there would be few Western casualties. Having driven the Serbs from Kosovo using these tactics and occupied the province itself, NATO is left in a position to enforce the political settlement it favors, which is autonomy. This is very much in the spirit of the post-World War I treaties and consociational democracy, a compromise between complete control of Kosovo from Belgrade and complete independence for Kosovo. But the Albanian Kosovars seek full independence, laying the basis for a conflict between the forces that occupy Kosovo and the people who live there. In the event of such a conflict, it is doubtful that NATO would be any more willing to pay a price in blood to defeat the Albanians than it had been to defeat the Serbs. Nor is it at all likely that NATO will repeat its Kosovo experience in other similarly troubled places.

This reluctance is in one sense good news. The clashes of the principles of legitimacy that dominated the nineteenth and twentieth-century international politics of Europe led to three great international conflicts. The competition between principles with which Europe and the world will have to cope in the twenty-first century—between national self-determination and the integrity of existing borders—leads to local bloodletting, which, Kosovo notwithstanding, the rest of the world can largely afford to, and therefore will, ignore. That in turn means that the prospects for resolving these local, isolated conflicts will depend not on outside powers but on the parties themselves; and those prospects, while not uniformly bright, are by no means hopeless.

Fatigue—and Diminished Stakes

THE PRECEDENTS that give rise to optimism for the resolution of the various incarnations of the national question in the twenty-first century are to be found where outside powers have *not* seriously intervened. In Northern Ireland, Catholics and Protestants are moving slowly and painfully toward mutually acceptable forms of power-sharing; in the Middle East, Israelis and Palestinians are moving, at a comparable pace and with even more attendant violence, toward a formula for a division of sovereignty with which each community can live. The American government has played a highly visible but substantively marginal role in each "peace process." The impetus for reaching a settlement comes in both cases from the parties themselves, as it did with the arrangements between the government of Russia and the Muslim province of Tatarstan, with the establishment of a regional parliament for Scotland, and with the treaty signed by the governments of Hungary and Romania protecting the cultural rights of ethnic Hungarians in Romania.

The lesson of these varying (and not necessarily eternal) arrangements for accommo-

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dating the collective demands of national minorities is that what is most needed to settle such conflicts is not ingenuity of constitutional design: there are, after all, many ways to build a structure in which two or more families can live comfortably but separately under the same roof. The necessary and all too rare ingredient for a solution to the contemporary version of the national question is the political will to settle.

National conflicts are settled by the parties to them when they are "ripe" for resolution and perhaps the most common source of ripeness is fatigue.[6] Parties to a conflict will be ready to compromise when they are exhausted from waging it, as in the cases of Northern Ireland and the Middle East.

The debilitating expenditure of blood and treasure will not be the only incentive for settling national conflicts in the twenty-first century. Prudence, rationality and the observation of what can happen in the absence of a settlement are not unknown and have evidently played a role in post-communist relations between Russians and Tatars, and between Hungarians and Romanians.

Yet another trend in twenty-first century international politics, however, may turn out to be the most effective solvent of national conflicts: the obsolescence of sovereignty itself.

The national question has been so contentious because the stakes have seemed so high: control of the machinery of the modern state, a supremely important twentieth-century institution that is the product of the two forces that shaped first Europe and then the world—the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. These forces conferred upon the political societies of Europe two tasks for which a powerful instrument was necessary: modern war and economic management. The French Revolution led to mass armies to wage wars; the Industrial Revolution produced ever more complicated, expensive and deadly weapons with which those armies could be equipped. Only a powerful state could recruit, train and support the soldiers, and develop and purchase the weaponry.

Modern war was born in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth, sovereign states assumed another responsibility for which a powerful state was needed: economic management. In communist countries the state's economic responsibility was total. The economic role of the central government elsewhere was more modest but still considerable: appropriating an increasing share of the society's output through taxation; providing, with the taxes it collected, an expanding array of services and public works; and using fiscal and monetary tools to cushion the shocks and abbreviate the downturns to which market economies are prone.

While neither great task has by any means disappeared, in the wake of the Cold War both are in decline. So, therefore, is the institution responsible for them, the state itself. Major war, the kind fought by men with weapons that only the powerful modern state can provide, is going out of fashion. While not impossible, it is less likely than at any time in the past two centuries.[7] The communist economic system is discredited: with the exception of North Korea, no sovereign state now seeks to control all facets of economic life. In other countries, where the balance between government control and the impersonal rules of the market in the governance of economic activity has periodically shifted, it has swung, in the wake of the Cold War, sharply in favor of the market.

The retreat from government control of economic activity is most noticeable where the national question began: in Europe. There, in the second half of the nineteenth century, what had previously been regarded as

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[6]The concept originates with I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). See also Zartman, "Ripeness Revisited", in *The Resolution of Conflict* (Washington, DC: National Academy of Science, 1999).

[7]See my "Is Major War Obsolete?", *Survival* (Fall 1998).

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agglomerations of politically inert peasants, rather than true nations, began demanding their own sovereign states, producing a raft of conflicting claims that could not all be fulfilled. Emblematic of this trend were the Czechs, who, as the twentieth century began, were unwilling to conduct their political business under German rule or their private transactions in the German language.

As the century ends, the Czech people, living in their own state, have no higher aspiration than for their interest rates to be set in Germany. Of course, if the Czech Republic succeeds in joining the European Union its interest rate would be set by a European, not a German, Central Bank in Frankfurt. But that is just the point: even mighty Germany, in economic terms Europe's most powerful state, has given up what was once a cardinal feature of sovereignty, the control of its own monetary policy.

The eclipse of the nation-state has been regularly foretold; now, as in the past, the state is not on the verge of withering away. But its once overweening and still formidable powers are plainly, if slowly and unevenly, declining. It is possible that they may someday diminish to the point at which the borders of sovereign states will have no more significance than those of American postal zones, and the bitter twentieth-century conflicts over borders will seem as distant and puzzling as the theological disputes that provoked battles and persecutions in medieval Europe do to us today. On that day the national question will have vanished; no one fights about the location of postal zones. But to the unhappy regions of the planet where, on the eve of the twenty-first century, the national question is still a virulent, poisonous one, that happy day will be a long time in coming. □

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Two Cheers for "Asian Values"

Nathan Glazer

QUESTIONS ABOUT "Asian values"—whether they justify authoritarianism, or have contributed to the remarkable economic ascent of East Asia, or to the region's subsequent and almost equally startling descent—have been the subject of wide and controversial discussion over recent years. But there is another question that has not been as widely considered: Will Asian values—can they—survive the homogenizing effects of globalization?

"Globalization" is a protean word, capable of taking on many meanings. I shall use it here to mean the worldwide spread of Western-dominated information and entertainment media, with their presumed effects on values in the places they reach. Václav Havel has offered the image of "a Bedouin mounted on a camel and clad in traditional robes under which he is wearing jeans, with a transistor radio in his hands and an ad for Coca-Cola on the camel's back." Perhaps the jeans and the Coca-Cola are, so to speak, only skin-deep; but the transistor radio, the television set and Hollywood movies: do they not undermine Bedouin values, whatever those may be?

The issue of the future of Asian values is rather more serious than that of the survival of Bedouin ones. For it is in East Asia that we find together the fullest developed version of a cultural or civilizational ethos that successfully nurtures rapid economic growth, and that in some key respects (or so it is generally believed and widely asserted) contrasts with what we find in "the West."

The most dynamic branch of Western civilization is that rooted in Western Europe, the United States and a few overseas societies of British origin. When we think of the "globalization of culture", what we have in mind is the influence of this branch of Western civilization, and in particular of America, on the other civilizations of the world. Will this influence lead to the homogenization of world culture as societies, cultures and civilizations seek economic development and material advancement? Or will deep cultural features, very different from those of the West, shape the impact of modernization and industrialization and ultimately survive these forces? Does the spread of the common technology-based economy, to which all societies and cultures seem to aspire, mean that their underlying distinctive cultural differences are destined to disappear?

Early Days

THE KEY AREA for the consideration of this problem is East Asia. It is there, in Japan, that a non-Western country first became a major and independent industrial-economic power, fully equivalent in its economic capacities to Western Europe and the United States. Clearly, the industrial, technical and organizational features of

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Western civilization that took root in Japan were initially borrowed from the West. But to what extent are the culture and values that accompanied these technical and organizational features so organically bound up with them that borrowing the latter also means adopting the former?

In the Seventies and Eighties we were surprised to see other East Asian countries—the "four little dragons" of Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore—join Japan in taking the path to successful industrialization and competition with the industrialized countries of the West, and as they did so, the same questions assumed a wider significance. And then, when mainland China, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia also joined the procession, the questions became urgent.

This series of developments can be interpreted in purely economic terms, and that is for the most part the way we have understood it. But why did we see this economic development first in poor East Asia, and not elsewhere? In the 1940s, according to *The Economist*, India and Ghana were expected to do better in economic performance than Japan and South Korea. In 1955 Simon Kuznets, later to win the Nobel Prize in economics, along with two distinguished collaborators, Wilbert E. Moore and Joseph J. Spengler, published a book entitled *Economic Growth: Brazil, India, Japan*. The grouping of these three countries together suggests that leading economists and social scientists at the time saw some equivalence in their economic situation, a notion that now seems outlandish.

The remarkable rise of Japan and its rapid postwar recovery and economic expansion led early on to consideration of whether a distinctive ethic or set of values played a key role in this then-unique case of non-Western industrialization. As long ago as 1957, Robert Bellah, in his *Tokugawa Religion*, sought an equivalent to the Protestant ethic, which in Max Weber's enormously influential interpretation played a key role in the rise of Western capitalism. In 1970 Herman Kahn, in his remarkably prophetic book, *The Emerging Japanese Superstate: Challenge and Response*, pointed to Japanese values, and perhaps Confucian values, to help explain the economic ascent of Japan, which he expected would in a few decades reach and surpass the United States in per capita GDP (which indeed it did, according to some ways of measuring). In the early 1970s, Henry Rosovsky and Hugh Patrick launched a project at the Brookings Institution to explain Japan's remarkable postwar economic growth (it eventually became a book edited by them, *Asia's New Giant: How the Japanese Economy Works*, 1976), and I considered for this project the role of "social and cultural" features in Japan's economic growth. Indeed, one could not but be deeply impressed by the distinctive values and effectiveness evident in Japanese education and the Japanese workplace.

In 1980 Roderick McFarquhar published a much discussed article in *The Economist* on the role of Asian values in the economic explosion of the "little dragons." (Only ten years before, Herman Kahn had expected that the role of countries like South Korea and Hong Kong would be restricted to providing cheap raw materials and labor for the emerging Japanese superstate. Even his prophetic powers did not extend to foreseeing how rapidly they would emerge from that subsidiary economic status.) Another relatively early speculator on the role of Confucian values in the economic success of the little dragons was Peter Berger, who in 1985 organized a conference with Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, which led to an interesting volume, *In Search of an East Asian Development Model* (1988).

By the 1980s the role of Confucian values in the rise of East Asia had become a growth industry, and nowhere more so than in Singapore, which was then exploring the possibility of introducing them into its school curricula. Tu Wei-Ming of Harvard became one of Singapore's chief consultants, and a fascinating book, *Confucian Ethics Today: The Singapore Challenge* (1984), records his consultations with Singapore educators on this enterprise. He later edited *The Triadic Chord:*

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Confucian Ethics, Industrial East Asia, and Max Weber (1991). The American Academy of Arts launched a seminar on the issue, one product of which was another volume edited by Tu Wei-Ming, *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity* (1996).

In the Eighties and Nineties the challenge of identifying a link between Asian values and economic growth became more complicated as other East and South Asian countries with very little or no connection to Confucianism—Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia—began showing remarkably high rates of economic growth. In an effort to redeem the Confucian hypothesis, its proponents emphasized the central role that populations of Chinese origin played in these economies. And, of course, the economic boom was most marked in mainland China itself.

The People's Republic, however, had purportedly cut off all ties with its Confucian past with the communist victory in 1949. Indeed, Confucianism had been denounced as the source of China's backwardness long before by Sun Yat-sen and other Chinese intellectuals and reformers. Were they wrong? Could we still see surviving fragments of the Confucian ethic in China after half a century of totalitarian communism? And would we need to take into account a Buddhist ethic and an Islamic ethic as well as a presumed Confucian ethic in order to accommodate the success of Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia? Or perhaps a relabeling with the vaguer term "Asian values", to accommodate the countries without a Confucian past, would do the trick.

While the dominant reason for the investigation of a distinctive East Asian set of values has been the need to explain the dramatic economic success of the area, there is another equally important question concerning them: regardless of what role they play in explaining the economic rise of East Asian countries, can the distinctiveness of East Asian values survive that rise? We call the kind of change we have seen in East Asia "modernization", which encompasses not only the economic aspect of development—factories, money and credit, banks, commercial relations, cities and skyscrapers, a consumer economy—but also the social and value changes that seem inevitably to accompany that economic aspect. Indeed, we so take for granted that economic and cultural changes occur in tandem, as they did in the West, that we sometimes call the larger change "Westernization." But this may be a misnomer: for so far in East Asia, economic change has in fact not been accompanied to the same extent by the social and value transformations that characterized modernization in the West—that is, secularism, the nuclear family, individualism, hedonism and the like.

We have then in East Asia the unique case in which (1) a distinctive non-Western value tradition existed, and still appears to exist, and (2) there has been a successful establishment and spread of a modern industrial culture. But if Asian values survive and even flourish, the expectation of the homogenization of culture through globalization is belied, and globalization may therefore be compatible with different values and cultures. Economic growth may lead to the extinction of species of flora and fauna, but the varieties of human culture may survive, perhaps even flourish, as a result of it.

Second Guessing

THE ECONOMIC COLLAPSE of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea, the collapse of the speculative boom in Hong Kong, and the prolonged economic depression in Japan have prompted a gleeful response in the West, which we might describe as "good-bye—and good riddance—to Asian values." Either the presence of those values was an illusion, it is now claimed, or they did not possess the virtues ascribed to them by observers, Western and Eastern, who were blinded by Confucian homilies. With the stress now on cronyism and corruption, perhaps Asian values were always quite the opposite of what we had thought they were.

A process of second-guessing quickly got

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under way. *The Economist*, which had done so much to advance the Asian values thesis over the years, now checked in with "Asian Values Revisited: What Would Confucius Say Now?", asserting that, "Asian values did not explain the tigers' astonishing economic success, and they do not explain their astonishing economic failures." The *New York Times Magazine* ran an article by Walter Russell Mead, "Asia Devalued: The financial crisis has exposed the 'Asian Values' of hard work, thrift, and family for what they always were: bunk." In the *Wall Street Journal*, a review of Christopher Patton's *East and West* by William McGurn informed us: "If there is a theme that unites the chapters it is a liberal democratic contempt for 'Asian values', which Mr. Patton describes as 'shorthand for the justification of authoritarianism, bossiness, and closed collusion.'"

This dumping on Asian values deserves four comments. First, not all East Asian countries followed Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia into an economic abyss. Japan, despite its difficulties, remains an economic powerhouse, with great exporting power, low unemployment by international standards, and a populace that seems not much affected by the economic downturn. Mainland China, Taiwan and Singapore have escaped the troubles of the badly afflicted countries, and South Korea and Hong Kong are recovering from their economic difficulties sooner than Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Second, note that the countries that are least affected by the East Asian economic collapse and that are most likely to recover soon are those located within the presumed zone of influence of Chinese and Confucian culture. Perhaps, then, so-called Asian values, if we limit them to the Chinese-Confucian sphere, are working at least to moderate the economic downslide.

Third, it is worth noting that the setback experienced by the region in 1997-98 was of a kind and dimension that had occurred repeatedly in the West in earlier years. But no one then drew the conclusion that Western values were thus proved to be incompatible with, or irrelevant to, the West's economic development, and there seems to be no reason for drawing such a conclusion about Asian values.

Finally, glee over the Asian economic collapse has tended to concentrate on only one aspect of Asian values—namely, the aspect promoted by the rulers of Malaysia and Singapore to defend the authoritarianism of their regimes. But when we come to what most people have understood by Asian values—not necessarily the versions promoted by the prime ministers of Malaysia and Singapore—I think this general dismissal is facile and overstated. As the reviewer of Christopher Patton's book goes on to say:

> Clearly many of those in power did equate Asian values with authoritarianism. Yet readership surveys by the *Far Eastern Economic Review* suggest that Asians themselves thought of Asian values as having to do more with strong families, education and hard work than with autocratic government.

Asian or Confucian values have generally been presented to us as a single package, in which the virtues of hierarchy and discipline and the obligations of obedience form a single ladder, reaching from the ruler down to the humblest. Hence the obedience of the son to the father, the wife to the husband, the younger to the elder brother is mirrored in the submission of all to the state. The promotion of this single package of relationships, binding families together and to the state, is naturally in the interests of ruling elites. But in fact, we find today no distinctive conception of the state as respected teacher and father in the countries of former Confucian culture. That aspect of Confucianism is quite dead, notwithstanding the efforts of the prime ministers of Malaysia and Singapore. Instead, we find riots in South Korea, governments voted out of power in Japan, electoral competition in Taiwan, and grumbling at authoritarian government in communist China and in Singapore.

We also find in various countries of the

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Confucian sphere the immoral cronyism and self-aggrandizement that have been so sharply evident in the economic setbacks of a number of Asian countries. (Singapore, rated by businessmen as among the cleanest of societies, being the exception.) In none of these countries, though, do we find a pronounced ethos of subservience to the state. True, the state may be powerful and may sustain itself through force and brutal means, but that is different from a distinctive value orientation: anyone is prone to submit to threat and force.

At the family level, and in the commitment to education and work motivated by the interests of the family, we *do* find a distinctive pattern that is clearly not based on any external force. Anyone reading through the research on Asian values is likely to be astonished by the evidence of strong family connections and of the commitment to education and work. A few scattered items from this research make the point: in Korea, the divorce rate was reported to be 1.16 percent in 1980. While it had indeed increased four times since 1965 from a mere 0.28 percent, the tide of Westernization still seemed remote. Divorce figures from other East Asian societies may be slightly larger, but compared with Western societies they are minuscule. So are rates of illegitimacy. Again from Korea: a 1967 survey asked, "If you had sufficient economic means to live on for the rest of your life, what would you do?" An overwhelming 97.7 percent of respondents said they would continue working. An item from Taiwan: "The majority of Taiwanese parents are living with at least one of the married sons."

The research by Harold Stevenson and his colleagues comparing schools in Japan and Taiwan with those in the United States finds that classes in Japan and Taiwan are larger, expenditure is less, achievement is greater, and the obligation of children to perform well for the sake of their families is overwhelming. Failure to do well is routinely attributed by parents not to the school, the teacher, the curriculum or the genes, but to insufficient effort by their children.[1] We find the same in Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and mainland China. "The most outstanding feature of the learning environment in Hong Kong", one report asserts, "is the pressure put on the student, both by parents and teachers, to study for examinations." American teachers regularly see these characteristics in the children of Asian immigrants.

The Survival Question

WE COULD MULTIPLY such items. But the question remains: Do such features—can they—survive under the impact of industrialization, urbanization, the new consumer society, the new means of communication, the universal appeal of *Titanic* and McDonald's, the "globalization" of culture?

Two of the major enterprises that attempt to trace the changing values of a range of contemporary societies argue that they do not and cannot. This is the position of Alex Inkeles, in his studies of modernization across nations,[2] and of Ronald Inglehart, in his extensive inquiries into the rise of post-materialist values. For our purposes, one serious problem with relying on these studies is that they include very few Asian countries. Inkeles, in his original research on modernization, includes India but no East Asian country. Inglehart, among his forty-three societies, includes from Asia only Japan and South Korea, and on many survey items he has no reports from the latter (*Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*, 1997).

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[1]Harold W. Stevenson and James W. Stigler, *The Learning Gap* (New York: Summit Books, 1992).

[2]Alex Inkeles and David H. Smith, *Becoming Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); Inkeles, "Continuity and Change in Popular Values on the Pacific Rim", in *Values in Education*, ed. John D. Montgomery (Hollis, NH: Hollis Publishing Co., 1997); Inkeles, *One World Emerging: Convergence and Divergence in Industrial Societies* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998).

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But even in this research, whose main thrust is to support the globalization thesis, we find some revealing items that run counter to it. In Inglehart's *Modernization and Postmodernization*, for example, we note some interesting East Asian variations. On the item, "A woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled", we find a very low level of agreement from the usual Western advanced countries but high positive response from Japan and South Korea (along with such unlikely company as Argentina, South Africa and Hungary). On whether one approves of a woman having a child as a single person, Japan comes out lowest. On whether one has a duty to love and respect one's parents, regardless of their faults, Korea scores at the very top.

Then, too, Inkeles reports in a round-up of recent research: "Between 1963 and 1991, the proportion of Taiwanese who claimed to have attended an ancestor worship ceremony increased from 39 percent to 75 percent." For Japan we have one of the longest series of values studies anywhere available, national surveys that have been conducted every five years since 1953. Preference for filial piety has been rising: 61 percent in 1963, rising to 73 percent in 1983. Inkeles reports that despite forty years of communist rule in Shanghai, in a 1990 survey the value of "diligence and frugality" scored first. And 72 percent "considered that failure in life was due to 'not working hard enough'", which is similar to the attitudes of Japanese and Taiwanese parents in judging their children's academic performance. In Baoding, on the mainland, 95 percent of elders and their children stress the importance of filial piety, while in Hong Kong, "a strikingly large proportion of 88 percent agreed with the idea that 'government should punish the unfilial.'"

And yet, of course, there is change. Inkeles reports that on the important tradition of maintaining the family line through a son, the proportion in Taiwan considering this "very important" dropped from 70 percent in 1963 to 32 percent in 1991. Arranged marriage in Taiwan has fallen sharply. And in the Japanese surveys, support for some traditional values has fallen.

The Family is Universal

TU WEI-MING, in *Confucian Ethics Today*, tells the story of a plaque that Taipei sent as a gift to its sister city, Houston, bearing the Confucian sentiment, "Men have their careers, women have their families." Houston's feminists protested, the matter was put to a vote, and eventually a modified translation was accepted. Ko Byong-Ik, a Korean sociologist, writing in Tu Wei-Ming's *Confucian Traditions*, tells us that most Koreans continue to adhere to Confucian beliefs and Confucian practices, despite their adherence to other religions. "Statistically, 90 percent of Korean Catholics and 76.4 percent of Korean Protestants . . . can be said to be Confucian according to their convictions and practices." And he concludes, "All men are Confucian."

Are we speaking, then, of Confucianism, or post-Confucianism, or vulgar Confucianism, or popular Confucianism—all terms which have been used in discussions of Asian values—when we report such findings? In none of these countries is there an official Confucianism, either in government or in education. Are we speaking of anything more than a strong family ethic, not very different from that which prevailed in the United States until recent decades (and that still prevails among many recent immigrants)? How different are Asian values, as revealed in this research, from the family ethic that has been the almost uniform brick and mortar of all traditional societies before the outset of Westernization, modernization, industrialization, mass communication and their corrosive influences?

When we speak of Asian values, it seems to me that we have something in mind that extends beyond the specific tradition of Confucianism, something that needed no great tradition, great books or classic philosophers to codify. This is the role that family, extended or nuclear, plays in almost all societies that

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have not reached the level of industrialization, urbanization and state welfare provisions typical of the economically developed nations of Western Europe and North America. In other words, when we say "Asian values", are we not really thinking of—one must excuse the banality of the expression—what American politicians have in mind when they extol "family values" and mourn their demise?

The family is universal. Some particular degree of closeness and responsibility and trust binding family members is also near universal. Mothers are expected to rear children, and do. Fathers are expected to help. Brothers and sisters have certain relationships and responsibilities they are expected to maintain. Heads of families deserve respect and deference from children, and get it. And so on. Admittedly the definition of who is to be included in the family may differ—in one society, the father's relatives but not the mother's, in another, more or less of the relatives outside the nuclear family are included. But the nuclear family remains the basis of society. Its scope and significance become markedly reduced in advanced modern society, where various functions are taken over by extra-familial institutions. While we still count on the family, for the most part, to raise, socialize and educate children, advanced Western societies have also developed substitutes for the family. Day-care centers, schools and old-age pensions gradually became essential, owing to the weakening of the family under the strains of industrialization and urbanization. Perhaps the existence of these family-replacing functions weakens the family structure further. That is, of course, a subject of permanent dispute between liberals and conservatives.

Clearly these family bonds are important for economic effectiveness. Children are spurred to work harder in school and to achieve, not only for the honor of the family but because they are expected in time to support aged parents. Businesses often find their most trustworthy employees among family or quasi-family members, their most dependable subordinates and successors in children and nephews. Superiors demand and expect respect and deference the way fathers do, and inferiors give it. This is the way the world has run for millennia. And this is what social scientists find in the East Asian countries.

But, helpful as it may be, this cannot be the sole or key ingredient in economic success and achievement. For if it were, we would be at a loss to explain why the Indian subcontinent lags behind. India, after all, has no family values problem. Indians viewing American films often ask, where is the family? In Indian films the hero has a family, the heroine has a family, even the villain has a family—fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, with duties, demands and obligations, populate these films, as they do Indian reality.

The question why some familism contributes to economic success (as in the East Asian countries) and some fails to (as in India and Africa) should lead us to contemplate the differences in conceptions of family ties among societies and cultures. It is commonly reported that in Africa a family connection means not that family members will assist the entrepreneur by providing willing and loyal employees, which seems to be a key function in East Asia, but that they will use up his resources by moving in and insisting they have a right to be supported. Family connection and closeness can also mean inefficient nepotism.

Not Starting, But Spurring

THE VALUES that we now think support economic development were once thought to restrain it, and the economist John Wong of Singapore, in his contribution to Tu Wei-Ming's *Confucian Traditions*, is still skeptical about the economic benefits of Confucian values:

> It is not enough to argue in general terms that the Confucian ethos is conducive to increased personal savings and hence higher capital formation. It must also be demonstrated forcefully and specifically whether such savings have been productively invested in business or

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industry or have been squandered in noneconomic spending, such as the fulfillment of social obligations, which is also a part of the Confucian social system. It must also be shown how Confucian values have actually resulted in effective manpower development in terms of promoting the upgrading of skills and not in encouraging merely intellectual self-cultivation or self-serving literary pursuits. A typical Confucian gentleman in the past would have shown open disdain for menial labor.

One concludes that the family features described by social scientists as a central part of the great tradition of Confucianism can serve a variety of ends. In East Asia, in combination with effective economic policies, they seem to have served to strengthen economic development, despite earlier expectations that they would only hamper it. Perhaps, as the quotation from John Wong suggests, it was only after Confucianism was sharply reduced, stripped of its ceremonial elements, and restricted to the realm of the family that it could facilitate and speed economic growth.

In resorting to the concept of Asian values, we seem to be referring to features we find in *all* traditional societies. The East Asian experience suggests to us that these values may not help to *initiate* rapid economic development, but can be extremely helpful—in combination with other key factors such as political stability and the right economic policies—in *spurring on* economic development once it gets started. Then the family loyalties, the commitment to aid family members, the commitment to education, the saving for family advancement all come into play. It is precisely these features that we fear are undermined by economic development in the West, where we have been alerted by Joseph Schumpeter to the destructive effects of capitalism on bourgeois values, and have been taught about "the cultural contradictions of capitalism" by Daniel Bell.

With rapid economic development well under way, we see rising concern in the countries of East Asia that the traditional values they took for granted before economic development are now being undermined. It is at this point that "Confucian values" come into their own and leaders, such as those in Singapore, typically begin to worry about how long they can shore them up. None of the leaders of East Asia thought Asian—or Confucian, or traditional—values would be helpful in getting their countries started on the road to economic development. Those same leaders now worry about the threat to these values from Westernization—because, in retrospect, those values seem to have been important in spurring their surprising take-offs.

But by Western standards, Asian values are still surprisingly firm. It is this continuing firmness that has not been taken into account in the recent trashing of their significance. Globalization undoubtedly affects social and cultural features, and, yes, undermines them. But the *rate* of undermining is surprisingly slow, and the difference in the rates of change in these key social and cultural characteristics between East and West still gives the East an advantage.

In the early 1970s, my economist colleagues in the Brookings study of the causes of Japan's economic success seemed convinced that we would see a slowdown there because of the huge increase in the price of oil, as Japan possessed no oil and had no alternative energy sources. It stood to reason, but it didn't happen. Again, with the economic troubles of the late 1990s in East Asia, we see the widespread assumption that the Asian economic surge has passed its peak. I am skeptical, as I was about the expectations of the American economists in 1973. The main reason for my skepticism is that values do undergird economic growth, and the values in East Asia that serve to maintain family stability, a commitment to education and high savings rates still show a surprising steadiness compared to developments in the West. Tradition maintains itself even in the face of so many aspects of globalization. It is much too early to count out Asian values. □

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Totalitarianism: Have We Seen the Last of It?

Kenneth Minogue

> ...totalitarianism has shaped, or, if one prefers it, distorted the political and governmental scene of the twentieth century. It promises to continue to do so to the end of the century.
>
> —Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, 1965

THERE IS NO perfect way to put the question, but it has to be asked: Was totalitarianism a twentieth-century aberration, or did it reveal something profound in the modern West, something we still must reckon with? One difficulty in posing the question is that since the fall of communism, the very idea of totalitarianism has largely evaporated. It is a rather crude idea, yet it has been central to the way freedom has been construed in our time.

It is the idea of totalitarianism itself that makes the question difficult to pose. That idea began its life describing something imagined to be admirable—Mussolini's *stato totalitario* as a heroic national enterprise. In the second half of the century, however, the term became an uneasy addition to the lexicon of political science, uneasy because it combined under a single rubric the rather different experiences of Nazism, Communism and Fascism. Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, in their influential book *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (1965), thought totalitarianism could be boiled down to six basic characteristics: an ideology, a single party typically led by one man, a terroristic police, a communications monopoly, a weapons monopoly and a centrally directed economy. Marxists were always unhappy with the idea, both because it put them in the same box as the Nazis, and because their undeniably totalist conception of communism, by contrast with actually existing communist states, claimed to generate freedom rather than servitude. On the other hand, radical philosophers such as Foucault interpreted Western civilization itself as a kind of concealed totalitarianism—a form of oppression without an oppressor. The idea thus lacked focus.

The first thing to clarify in asking our question, then, is the meaning of totalitarianism itself. In this task, we must be cautious of entanglement with the melodramas of twentieth-century politics. If in the twenty-first century we should be threatened by freedom-destroying ventures seeking to create an ant heap society, the one thing we can be reasonably confident of is that they will not feature men in jackboots. Far from being announced by the drumbeats of revolution, they are likely to be stealthy and insidious. For what one must never forget about all

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totalitarian experiences is that they are created (though not necessarily sustained) by idealists thirsting for virtue.

To expound an idea is to plunge into abstraction, which is why, from the beginning of Western thought, the idea of a perfect society has taken a philosophical form. The traditional civilizations with which the classical Greeks were familiar all imposed some overarching scheme on human life, and virtue consisted in fitting into one's place. The imaginary societies of the utopian tradition merely rationalized this type of arrangement. Karl Popper, in *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945), fingered Plato as the great exponent of what Popper called "the closed society", and in *Laws*, Book V, we find as perfect an account of such a society as one could wish for. The first best society involved community in womenfolk, children and all possessions. Ownership would have been banished from life, and

> all possible means have been taken to make even what nature has made our *own* in some sense common property, I mean, if our eyes, ears, and hands seem to see, hear, act, in the common service; if, moreover, we all approve and condemn in perfect unison and derive pleasure and pain from the same sources—in a word, when the institutions of a society make it most utterly one, that is a criterion of their excellence than which no truer or better will ever be found.

Plato, then, could conceive of the complete extinction of individuality long before individualism became central to Western society. The essence of totalitarianism is the project of transforming human life by making people, conceived of as the *matter* of perfection, conform to some single overriding *idea*. All of these idealisms turn nasty when it is discovered that human beings are unsuitable material for crafting social perfection. And since human beings are, in totalitarian terms, merely social creatures, to be valued only for their potential in creating perfection, those found lacking may be, and of course have been, dispensed with fairly ruthlessly. Marx, in his much later version of the idea contained in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, deplored distinguishing between the individual and society because the individual, in his view, was inconceivable except as part of society.

What makes Marx central to the totalitarian project is his clear recognition that it was incompatible with the modern Western idea of the individual as a unique soul or self capable of bearing rights. To be made suitable *matter* for a perfect society, individuals had to be reduced to a form of generalized social substance. This is why Marx construes consciousness as merely a mirror, generally distorted, of reality, and an individual as nothing else but a particular instance of social being. Death, Marx concedes, "seems to be a harsh victory of the species over the *particular* individual and to contradict their unity. But the particular individual is only a *particular species-being*, and as such mortal." This, also from the 1844 *Manuscripts*, is so far as I know Marx's only reference to death. This line of thought makes the disposal of quite large numbers of people as surplus to the requirements of social transformation entirely a technical matter. Death is merely a biological event, and the communist practice of referring to the people as the "masses" takes on an exact significance.

Society, then, cannot be reconfigured in terms of an idea if it consists of individuals each pursuing his or her own projects. A perfect society must consist of a population exclusively devoted to some shared enterprise. People have no value except as they contribute to the success of that enterprise. This, of course, means that totalitarianism directly contradicts what we understand by a "civil society", described by Michael Oakeshott as one in which individuals freely associate together in self-chosen projects. The idea of "inalienable rights"—indeed, any idea of individual rights—is, properly, incompatible with social perfection. The idea of rights has, however, become so elastic that it can now be used to cover any kind of imagined perfection.

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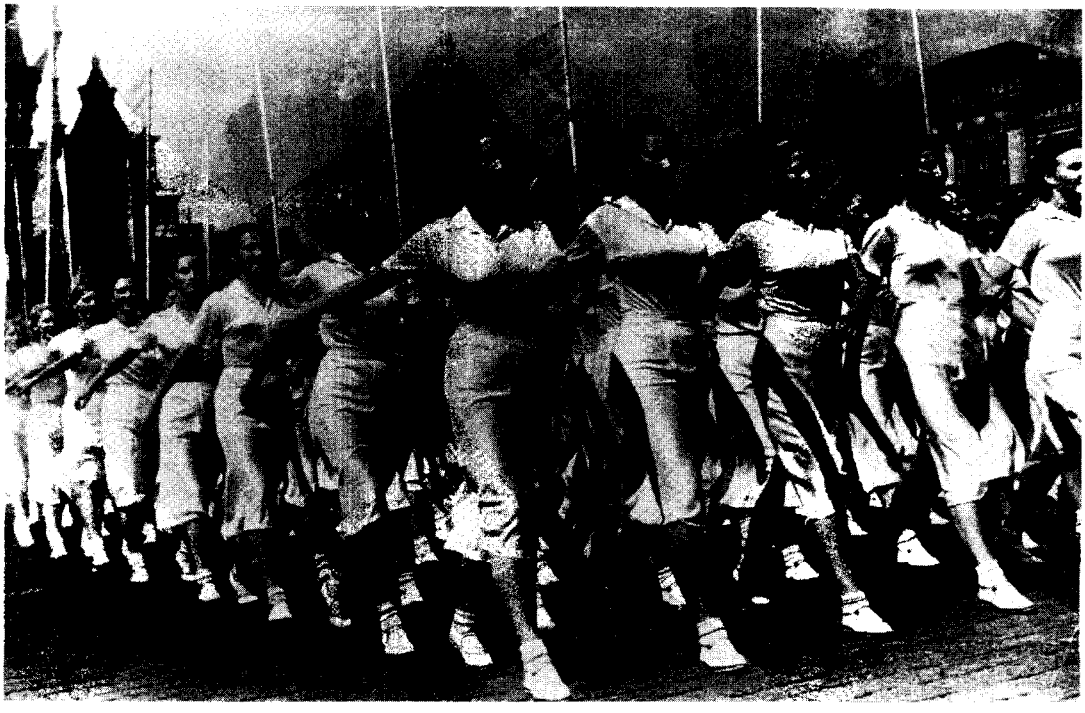
Management and Spontaneity

TOTALITARIANISM is the imposition of some idea of a collective enterprise on a society conceived of as plastic. As Maxim Gorky said of Lenin: "the working classes are to Lenin what minerals are to the metallurgist." We may add one further characteristic to this analysis: the enterprise will generally be *productive*. "Communism", Lenin declared in 1919, "is the higher productivity of labor—compared with that existing under Capitalism." Indeed, production to satisfy human needs has been at the heart of virtually all the popular utopias of modern Europe, and in these terms the military project of the Nazis may be counted, if not eccentric, at least as unusual. A world that had abolished slavery, and was technologically inventive, hardly needed to bother with imagining slave labor, and even in the case of the Nazis a central part of their appeal was the promise of *Autobahnen* and Volkswagens.

It is an important implication of this idea that the productive enterprise must be one in which all share equitably, indeed usually equally. Unequal distribution has always been recognized as the ultimate cause of political conflict, and conflict is what the perfect society will have transcended. A totalitarian state would thus be a state in which everyone lived the same kind of life: as contributory to, and benefiting from, the productive enterprise. Hence Lenin in the period of War Communism sought to replace the vagaries of the market by rationing, which, of course, had the added attraction that it gave him vastly more control over his followers.

Totalitarian projects come in various shapes and sizes, but they all have in common the idea that each version is what real human nature demands, being the most natural way for human beings to live, superior above all to the coercions and makeshifts of the way we live now. This means that, in some sense, the project of perfection should emerge from people themselves. It must not seem to be imposed. A good society is one in which spontaneous goodness replaces civil coercion. Soviet man was envisaged as a dedicated producer, and Lenin was keen about *subbotniks* (volunteers who worked without pay on



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Saturdays) because they served to confirm that there was an element of popular enthusiasm for labor discipline. The trick is to derive the right policy from the masses themselves. When, for example, the Chinese revolution came to the village described in William Hinton's documentary *Fanshen*, the cadres did not teach a doctrine. Instead, they asked the Leninist question: Who depends on whom? It took the peasants some time to cotton on to what this signified. At first they thought, in the falseness of their consciousness, that they depended on the landlord, who provided the land and the seeds. Slowly they came to understand that actually it was the landlord who depended entirely on their energy and labor. The peasants were oppressed and exploited, but they had to be taught to "speak bitterness." The later campaign to "let a hundred flowers bloom" was designed to produce useful criticism of local cadres, though when the Great Helmsman discovered that the Party itself had become the object of criticism he moved to an "anti-rightist" campaign that soon chopped down these blooms. A lot of management has to go into the spontaneity.

While the unity of totalitarian projects is to be found in the implementation of a single idea, policy requires complex judgements on a variety of more mundane issues that that idea does not determine. Thus, success in producing the goods depends on getting the technology right, and in 1959 Mao took the whole of China on an adventure called the Great Leap Forward. Absurd targets were wrung from the leaders of the communes right down to the peasantry. These targets were based on socialist theory created by Stalin's favorite geneticist, Lysenko, who had caused a sensation (and much Western incredulity) by claiming that environmentally acquired characteristics would be inherited by the next generation. Sowing seed deep in the ground no doubt startled bemused peasants, and led directly to a catastrophic crop failure. This failure was further compounded by the fact that the peasants were often not in the fields to harvest such corn as did manage to come up because they were too busy in backyard furnaces making steel out of old woks, iron fences and any other suitable materials to hand. The Chinese leadership, in classic despotic style, could not understand why the promised grain production had not eventuated, and blamed the peasants for concealing corn. The fatal famine that resulted replicated in many respects the Stalinist disaster of the early Thirties in the Soviet Union, and even more people—an estimated thirty million—died.[1]

These were, of course, spectacular results of revolutionary failure in unusual circumstances, but the basic components of the disaster are by no means uncommon. All you need is managed popular enthusiasm and a set of rulers in the grip of some grand moral or technological idea. And here we come to the crucial point as far as our opening question is concerned: *Contemporary conditions are friendly to both the enthusiasm and the grand technology that are the preconditions of totalitarianism.* Education, for example, has been the plaything of social engineers throughout the century. No utopia is complete without incorporating the idea that children are the plastic materials of social perfection, and it has been a notable achievement of many teachers in the twentieth century to stultify education without producing the promised generation of peaceful communitarians. Meanwhile, the rising power of genetics promises possibilities of human perfection such as the eugenicists of a century ago (who merely achieved racism) could only dream of.

Modern democracies do indeed lack the coercive apparatus of the old totalitarian states, but they have acquired remarkable talents in imposing orthodoxies upon their subjects. The respectability that once haunted the lives of conformists has now been replaced, in such institutions as universities, by a schedule of prohibited beliefs and required sensibilities enforced by professional discipline, compulso-

[1]See Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: China's Secret Famine* (London: John Murray, 1996).

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ry indoctrination and in some cases criminal prosecution. (For a specific example of the management of popular attitudes, consider the attack on smoking.) There can be no doubt that the West exhibits in abundance the conditions in which we might all be subject to an imposed social unity implementing some scientific fancy.

The Erosion of Civil Society

TOTALITARIANISM is essentially a crafting of society in terms of an idea, and the problem it faces is the problem recognized by Plato in *Laws*, namely, that individual human beings think individually rather than socially. From this point of view, Christianity and totalitarian projects are initially faced with the same problem: the fact that each individual *is* his or her own world. What Christians call pride, the placing of oneself rather than God at the center of the universe, becomes in totalitarian terms a form of alienation induced by a divided society that is to be transcended.

This is one sense in which critics have often taken totalitarian projects to be essentially religious. Ordinary projects are to be judged in terms of desirability, while religious projects are matters of identity. They are not normally to be disputed about. But there is one vital difference between these two doctrines in religious terms: Christianity posits a world after death in which the defects of the here and now can be remedied. Totalitarian theories raise the stakes by insisting that perfection must be achieved on earth. If all we have is this mortal life, it follows that activism is likely to become more frenzied. And the minds of the people can only be focused on politics if Christianity—or any religion that posits an afterlife—can be demoted to the status of an illusion.

What directly blocks totalitarianism is individuality, which must be replaced by social consciousness. Now all totalitarian theorists have recognized that what sustains individuality in the modern world is the family; indeed, since Plato these theorists have identified it as the source of social imperfection in any society. This is why in all communist revolutions, the family has been a direct object of attack. The Chinese tried to replace domestic life with canteens, and in many communes men and women were required to sleep separately in dormitories.

Religion and the family have thus been notable barriers to the success of the totalitarian enterprise. Both are institutions of civil society that impede the totalitarian project of first atomizing society into pseudo-individuals, and then totalizing these fragments by submerging them in the solidarity of a productive enterprise.

What is the strength of these barriers now? In the United States, Christianity remains strong, though it cannot (for constitutional and other reasons) be dominant. But churches throughout Europe are in steady decline, less it would seem as a result of deep thought about the rationality of Christian practice than from nothing more profound than dislike of the inconvenience of meeting the demands of what is derided as "institutional religion." Families are breaking up in record numbers, leading to a steady increase in single-member households. Totalitarian rulers devoted immense energy to combatting religious belief, and to getting women out of the household and into the labor force where, treated as equal with men, they could be assimilated to the grand productive project. What Stalin and Mao worked for in vain has today fallen effortlessly into place with the triumph of the religion of convenience and the spread of modern feminism.

It is almost as if totalitarian ideas were less projects than prophesies. A variety of liberations seeping through Western societies has made unnecessary the melodramatics of earlier totalitarian repression. Individuals have learned to follow their impulses, with less concern than before for constancy and coherence. One casualty has been the family as a lifelong commitment. Again, many women have been persuaded that unless they join men

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in the workforce, they lack freedom and dignity. Hence, the individual and the family, those gritty units on which so many revolutionary projects were shipwrecked, have in large measure dissolved.

And what has emerged resembles the classical idea of a vast household, which is how the Greeks conceived of despotism. In a despotism, all initiative had to flow from the despot himself, and everything both public and private belonged to him. In earlier modern times, European rulers sought to determine the religious beliefs of their subjects, but such repression generally faced active subjects—nobles and bourgeois—impatient of any control beyond what was needed for keeping the peace. Besides, the fact that kings were "above" peoples, and therefore in some degree alien to them, limited their power, in contrast to democratic governments that could claim actually to speak for those who elected them. The so-called "enlightened despots" of the eighteenth century sought to impose uniformity on their realms, often by the use of the teacher and the torturer. Revolutionary and totalitarian rulers were their successors and used the same techniques.

The paradox of twentieth-century government, however, is that it is often the apparent virtues of governments that are most damaging to freedom. Easier divorce and the provision of welfare have removed the material necessities on which families were sustained. And just as these pleasing liberations have jeopardized social institutions, so it is also the agreeably facilitative activities of government—the subsidies and provision of education, health, medical advice and more—that have turned the state into a gigantic household. As has long been recog-

Killing the Antibodies

Pluralists rejoice in variety. . . . For them, a good society is a mosaic of vibrant smaller collectivities—trade unions, universities, business associations, local authorities, miners' welfares, churches, mosques, Women's Institutes, NGOs—each with its own identity, tradition, values and rituals. Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher of absolute sovereignty, famously compared such collectivities to 'worms in the entrails of a natural man.' Pluralists see them as antibodies protecting the culture of democracy from infection.

Pluralists know that the disciplines of democracy do not come naturally. They have to be learned; and it is in the little platoons, in the intermediate institutions which stand between the state and the individual, that we learn them. But the little platoons are vulnerable as well as precious. Totalitarian states colonise or cripple them, but even well-intentioned democratic states, acting in the supposed interests of their peoples, and responding to what they see as the imperatives of social justice or the free market or efficiency, have a propensity to encroach on them, to curb their freedom of action and to impose alien norms on them. This has been a leitmotif of postwar British history, under governments of both parties: Aneurin Bevan nationalising local authority hospitals; Anthony Crosland trying to abolish the grammar schools; Peter Walker sweeping away ancient counties; Margaret Thatcher handbagging universities, trade unions and local councils; David Blunkett naming and shaming schools that his inspectors decree to be failures—all thought (or think) that they were acting for the best. As a result of their actions, British civil society, which was one of the strongest in the world in the 19th century, is now one of the weakest in the democratic west.

—David Marquand, *Prospect* (June 1999)

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nized, therapy replaces political repression, and it is generally more effective.

In other words, our situation is a confusing one. If we look to the substance of what most of us want to do, we are remarkably free, and it would be absurd to smell repression. If, however, we look at the formal features of how we are ordered, at the processes by which governments increasingly intrude into our lives, we find ourselves threatened with a kind of enslavement. The progress of what we might call "soft" totalitarianism thus depends on the way in which our character changes as our attention is fixed upon the substance of our lives rather than its form.

The Paradox of Democracy

THE BROAD answer to the question I have posed in the title of this essay is that totalitarianism, properly understood as both an impossible and an irresistible political and social vision, is one of the profound drives of our civilization. The signs of its vitality seem to me to be abundant, and I have been suggesting that certain vital barriers to totalitarianism in the past no longer stand in its way. I shall content myself now with sketching out several features of the modern world that would facilitate the emergence of a "soft" (which is to say, relatively bloodless) totalitarianism.

The first of these is the evolution of government from a limited role as guardian of civil peace to its current dominance as an all-purpose provider of services ranging from pensions and medical care to equalization and whatever gets construed as "social justice." It is as part of this drive to improve the lives of its subjects that governments have taken ever greater regulatory and discretionary powers, which must be financed by rising taxation. Charity has been nationalized, and its range has enormously expanded under its new name of "welfare." In each Western nation, the story has been somewhat different, but none has been unaffected.

Charity used to be the province of the church, and governmental expansion into the welfare industry is merely the continuation of the compulsion Western states have to appropriate the responsibilities that used to be performed in civil society by churches, universities, cultural organizations, professional associations and the rest. Such an aggrandizement of state power has been accruing since late medieval times, though there have also been periods of retreat. As the state moved into the sphere of education, it became difficult to resist the temptation to mix education with public instruction. Indeed, the move into education is in part the consequence of the nationalization of charity. When, for example, governments start supplying medical services to the poor, they cannot help soon involving themselves in determining how people live their lives, with the result that most countries now have such a figure as a Surgeon General dispensing good advice about some "national strategy" to determine optimal levels of obesity, suicide, deaths from heart disease or lung cancer, and much else. The rising level of illegitimacy and the dangers of AIDS have led governments to the tricky art of telling people how to manage their sex lives. And as governments have taken over ever more responsibility for the financing of education, they have become insistent that currently favored doctrines and conditions (for example, about access to education) be implemented by schools and universities.

Some of these developments go back to Bismarck's Germany in the late nineteenth century, but most have emerged in this century, often quite recently. All such policies responded to the specific problems, real or imagined, that an agitated journalism and a responsive democracy could conceive. What is seldom understood is that these policies amount to a profound transformation in the respective moral weight of governments and citizens. For is it not obvious that in the contemporary world it is governments that increasingly spend on moral imperatives such as justice, welfare and public education, while individuals, able to enjoy national provision

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of these necessities, are left free of any obligation to do other than indulge themselves? The very term "individualism", signifying a principle that governs the choices people make, has become synonymous with selfishness and indulgence.

Similarly, governments benefit from expert advice and are thus sources of wisdom and solutions, whereas their subjects constantly cause problems by folly, addiction, lack of self-control and other vices. It is little wonder that high-minded bishops and journalistic pundits are capable of taking the view that the higher the taxation the more civilized the society.

All this has been done in the name of democracy, even though some measures (for instance, those imposing toleration upon populations given to racism, sexism and the like) may very well lack popular support. But the outcome of these separate developments has been to highlight what might well be called a paradox of democracy. As things currently stand, populations that are evidently both selfish and foolish enjoy the right to elect governments that are both morally and intellectually superior to them.

One can only wonder how long this can be allowed to continue. Indeed, the spread of proportional representation in European countries—a system that muffles the decisiveness of the popular voice—suggests that politicians are already beginning to take the problem in hand. And we may be sure that the removal of the benefits of democracy as we currently enjoy it will be done in the name of democracy itself. As a direct consequence of the state's accretion of both morality and wisdom, the private realm has steadily been absorbed into the regulated society. Put politics in command, advised Mao, echoing the totalitarian tradition; an army of academics took that advice and promptly set out to demonstrate that everything is about politics. Similarly, the feminist slogan about the personal being the political supplies a license for governments to invade both the kitchen and the bedroom. The confusion has become such that political issues come to be described as "ethical", and vice versa.

Agents of Homogenization

THE ULTIMATE question in considering the advance of totalitarian tendencies must be: who is promoting them? The answer might seem to be that nobody is pushing them at all. And it may well be true that the present totalizing drift of Western civilization is largely the unplanned outcome of a host of responses to specific conditions. In other words, totalitarianism must ultimately be attributable to our basic problem-solution logic. It may just be that we cannot leave well enough alone.

But I do not think that this is the full story, for in some ways it is precisely the invisibility of agency in this drift that is most striking. Consider on this point the fact that our inherited morality of right and wrong is currently being replaced by a form of manners and morals called "political correctness." This is a codification of a collective sensitivity that stereotypes the supposed responses of women, Hispanics and other people classified as "minorities." It is a very odd form of morality indeed, and not the least of its oddities is that many of its human vehicles spent much of their lives denying that there was a single right way of judging moral and political issues. Such a denial seemed to them so evidently sensible that they did not recognize it as a doctrine at all, and they dismissed its critics as "right-wing reactionaries", critics of what any healthy mind would recognize as common decency. As the economist Joan Robinson once remarked, ideology is like breath: one does not smell one's own.

Political correctness has thus come to be regarded as the spontaneous conduct of everyone not suffering from false and evil ideas such as racism, sexism and homophobia. But it is a spontaneity that has been ruthlessly imposed upon those for whom it does not come naturally. One prominent instrument for the imposition of this emerging orthodoxy

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is the "role model", a descriptive term invented by the sociologist Robert Merton, and one that has come increasingly to describe any set of people whom the young are believed to imitate. We thus have a symbiotic relationship between the young on the one hand, and role models (such as pop stars, television celebrities, sporting heroes and models) on the other, and the relationship works both ways. Each may be controlled in terms of the other. Teachers are told (by governmental agencies, for example) that they must not smoke in public for fear of influencing their pupils, and cigarettes have been removed from contemporary images of famous figures such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Jackson Pollock.

The familiar versions of totalitarianism did not hesitate to purge unsuitable "matter" from the state. Our contemporary civil morality does just the opposite: it insists on including everyone in the benefits of society—but only on its own terms. Where sensitivity does not exist, people will be publicly instructed in it, and there will be no nonsense about volunteering. Indeed, by putting together the apparently separate developments that are transpiring in many corners of contemporary Western life, one can begin to recognize some of the agents of homogenization. They are to be found in a highly dispersed network of lawyers, civil servants, counselors, social workers, teachers and other agents of government, each of whom is performing one small part of this grand task, each part having its own highly specific justification. Therapy and public instruction are much nicer than liquidation. But we may invert Mandeville's famous parable of the hive: while every part is full of virtue, yet the whole is very far from being a paradise.

The Bolshevik Illusion

THE TOTALITARIAN drift is largely composed of specific responses to changing circumstances, but there is perhaps one shared central idea that makes the totality of moves coherent. We might call it "the Bolshevik illusion", because the Bolsheviks were the first people to act on it. They had acquired from Marx the view that history was the story of a hitherto blundering humanity that had finally arrived at an understanding of its own real character. At last mankind was learning how to take its destiny into its own hands, and the Marxists themselves were the ones who had the knowledge of how to do it. Modern societies were defective in that the riches of human skill and culture were still limited to small groups in society. Such specialization had hitherto been necessary for progress, but we now had come to know, among other things, the secret of economic productivity and cultural creativity. In the new society, everyone would at last enter into the full human heritage. Redistribution was not merely of material things, but embraced the entire culture.

Unfortunately, the Bolsheviks believed that the ultimate in productivity was the assembly line and the blast furnaces of heavy industry. They went overboard for the time and motion approach of Taylorism. And their culture slowly collapsed into propaganda. Before long, the capitalist world had cut the ground from under their feet with a variety of dazzling new technologies.

We may well fail to learn from this interesting episode, because endemic to Western thought is a belief in the all-conquering virtues of instrumental rationality, what Michael Oakeshott called "rationalism." It is hard to keep before our eyes the fact that most of the turning points of our civilization did not happen because we planned them, and that many things we did plan proved self-defeating. Christianity seemed so full of mysticism and confusion to some early modern thinkers that some of them maintained that Islam was a far more rational religion. Who in the West would now agree? Again, the religion of a crucified God hardly seemed to qualify (especially to pagan Romans) as the basis of a militarily dominant civilization, yet

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that was how it turned out. Max Weber has plausibly argued that much in capitalism emerged from the activities of Calvinists whose eyes were focused on heaven. The intellectual power of the modern West partly results from the academic activities of thinkers who had no interest in power at all; much of its creativity accords with Hamlet's "by indirections find directions out." Intrusive governments, however, leave no indirection undirected.

The fact that modern technology has made so much of our culture instantly available tempts us to think that the world is now our oyster. In fact, all that is available to us is our culture *as formulated,* which is a small and insignificant part of what we are. The Bolshevik illusion involves the belief that everything that impels us toward a total and inclusive society is creative, even adventurous. The reality is that cultural exhaustion is passing itself off as *le dernier cri.* Fortunately, because of the plurality of the West, we may still have the resources to find our freedom anew. But it is important that we should know what is happening to us. □

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The Most Dangerous Country

Nicholas Eberstadt

IN 1992, TWO YEARS before his death, Kim Il Sung, the "Great Leader" of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea), began to publish a compendium of reminiscences about his life and times. Although he inhabited a society that automatically acclaimed his every utterance for its immortal wisdom, the old man—the only ruler the state had ever known until then—could rightly believe that nonetheless he had an epic story to tell.

This former Soviet Red Army officer, after all, had survived dire perils and had gone on to savor triumphs of historic proportion. In 1950 he launched the Korean War in the mistaken hope of quickly overrunning and absorbing the Republic of Korea (ROK, or South Korea). Although his grave miscalculation led to an international embroilment that devastated his country, he managed to emerge from the disaster intact and unbowed. The world's greatest power, the United States, had fought against him for three years and had been unable to defeat him.

In contradistinction to other communist governments (whose doctrines regarded dynastic succession as inherently counterrevolutionary), Kim openly founded a socialist dynasty in North Korea, with his brother and then later his son designated as heir to, and vanguard of, the revolutionary tradition. And he originated a quasi-religious philosophy, *juche*-thought. *Juche*'s twenty million avowed adherents—the entire populace of his country—had been taught that the destiny and salvation of the Korean people, who had been partitioned between two separate and mutually hostile states through the settlements of World War II, would lie in an eventual reunification beneath an independent, socialist government—that is to say, Kim's own government, directed by Kim's own family.

Although Kim's memoirs ostensibly recounted events past, they were suffused with the Great Leader's confidence that he knew what lay in store for his regime—and, indeed, for all Korea. The conviction that history was on the side of his North Korean project was conveyed by images throughout the book, and, perhaps most significantly, by its title: *Segi Wa Toburo*—"With the Century." But as the end of Kim's century now approaches, very different sorts of images of North Korea prevail. Some of those were conveyed in an arresting videotape broadcast on Japanese and South Korean television in December 1998. Shot secretly by a North Korean refugee, the video presented scenes from everyday life in several towns in the DPRK. Western journalists who watched the program described what they saw:

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> Barefoot orphans sucking fishbones in a squalid outdoor market; women picking lice from each other's hair; men wading into a river to fish out the bodies of friends who starved to death or were shot by border guards.[1]
>
> In one scene, an emaciated boy staggers from hunger as the cameraman asks him where he lives. The child is an orphan and lives on what scraps he can find in the open air market. He is clearly close to collapse. In another harrowing scene, a small girl tries to scoop dirty water to drink from a puddle with a plastic bag. Some of the children said they had run away from state-run 'relief centres' where the only food was two ladles of corn gruel a day. In some cases their parents had died or gone away to search for food and never came back.[2]

The images were shocking because they were so anomalous. Desperate hunger is not supposed to strike societies that are urbanized, industrialized and free from chaos or war. Yet urban, industrial North Korea was—and is—manifestly in the grip of a terrible and protracted food crisis. Pyongyang had formally issued an emergency appeal for international humanitarian food aid in 1995, the year after Kim Il Sung's death; international relief operations have been under way ever since. At the end of the twentieth century, the regime has lost the capability to feed its own populace. In fact, its failure is so pervasive, so deep and so irremediable that we may now begin to speak of, and to contemplate, the end of the North Korean project.

In the most obvious of senses, of course, that project is still very much with us at the end of 1999. The DPRK continues to function as a state: it vigorously controls its borders (and the people within them); it conducts a foreign policy; it demands—and enjoys—all the recognitions of sovereignty. Yet at the same time one can also say that the North Korean project, in some profound and meaningful sense, has already come to an end. For it has totally failed to accomplish the missions for which it was ostensibly constructed—missions, indeed, on which the DPRK's authority and legitimacy have always been predicated.

Those missions were, first and foremost, the unification of the entire Korean Peninsula under its rule; and second, the implementation of a program of sustained socialist growth that would permit the state to amass steady power and allow the populace to enjoy a modicum of prosperity. The North Korean system has not achieved either of those objectives. But more than that: from our current vantage point it is apparent that socialist North Korea is systemically incapable of accomplishing those very objectives that justify its existence. The failure of North Korea's unification quest and of its economic formula marks the end of any positive purpose for the North Korean state.

The Unification Project

TO UNDERSTAND North Korea's circumstances today, we must begin with an interpretation of its relentless, bold and yet ultimately fruitless quest for unification of the Korean Peninsula on its own terms. *Interpretation* is the operative term here, as all students of North Korean affairs will appreciate. The North Korean government has, for over fifty years, enshrouded itself in deliberately fashioned mystery. By conscious and long-standing design, less reliable information is available about the DPRK than perhaps any other country in the modern world. (Compared with it, contemporary China is an open book.) To complicate matters further, "strategic deception"—that is to say, programmatic efforts to mislead potential opponents about intentions and capabilities—always seems to have figured prominently in North Korean statecraft. (Events leading up to Pyongyang's surprise attack against South Korea in June 1950 constitute the most famous of those exercises, but it is merely a single case in point.) The problematic nature

[1]Kevin Sullivan and Mary Jordan, *Washington Post*, March 13, 1999.

[2]Juliet Hindell, *Daily Telegraph*, December 19, 1998.

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of that evidentiary record, it is worth noting, goes far in explaining why contemporary North Korea watchers can and often do arrive at dramatically different conclusions about the meaning and significance of given reports about, or pronouncements by, the DPRK.

Yet I would submit that from the very inception of the North Korean state the DPRK has maintained a consistent diagnosis of the problems of a divided Korea, and has cleaved to a consistent prescription for remedying them. From the very beginning, Pyongyang's leadership regarded the Republic of Korea to the south as a flawed, corrupt and illegitimate regime, a government with little chance of surviving on its own and with no right to do so. And from the very beginning, "unification" meant unification on Pyongyang's terms and Pyongyang's terms alone.

Thus for the DPRK, the Korean War, far from constituting a catastrophe that impelled new thinking about the unification question, seems instead simply to have been chalked up as an understandable miscalculation: an initial, imperfect application of a fundamentally sound unification strategy. Over the next several decades, North Korea systematically and meticulously prepared to consummate that strategy by building its military might and waiting for the crisis in South Korea or the rupture in Washington-Seoul relations that would allow it to accomplish its mission.

The awaited opening never arrived. By the 1980s, it was apparent that North Korea's unification policy—which at bottom had always been a gamble—was a lost bet. Contrary to the DPRK's caricatures, the Republic of Korea had developed into one of the postwar era's great economic success stories. And by the late 1980s, the South Korean political system, which had finally embraced the principles of constitutional democracy, was steadily gaining strength, confidence and domestic support. The U.S.-South Korean alliance, too, looked stronger than ever. Pyongyang's allies, by contrast, had made it clear that they would not aid the DPRK if it were to provoke another crisis on the Korean Peninsula. In Leninist terminology, the "correlation of forces" between the two Koreas had tilted unmistakably against the DPRK and seemed set only to worsen in the future. North Korea had missed its chance.

From our present vantage point, we may be tempted to conclude that the unification strategy was doomed from the start. It was not. If events had played out only somewhat differently, it might well have succeeded. For several decades, after all, there was more than a little truth in Pyongyang's view of the ROK as a fragile and potentially unstable system. Until the late 1980s, South Korea had not effected a single peaceful transfer of presidential power, and as late as 1979 a South Korean president was assassinated by his own security chief. Pyongyang's expectation that Washington would retreat from its commitment to Seoul was not just wishful thinking: during the 1960s and much of the 1970s—as the Vietnam debacle unfolded—such a prognosis would have seemed prescient to many independent observers.

In international press reports, the North Korean leadership is often described as irrational, even mad. Such characterizations are both inattentive and inaccurate: they fail to discern the deep logic of a system whose precepts and starting premises happen to differ sharply from our own. It would be similarly misguided to dismiss North Korea's approach to unification as a crazy scheme.

Pyongyang's plan for unification-by-conquest was, rather, a careful, calculating, high-risk venture. Like many other high-risk ventures, it ultimately proved to be unsuccessful. But unlike most strategists and entrepreneurs who operate successfully in high-risk environments, Pyongyang had no "fall-back" plan. The DPRK's own chosen unification strategy, furthermore, happened to be strongly "path dependent": in doggedly pursuing it, the leadership ineluctably closed off other important options and progressively narrowed its own freedom of maneuver. With the failure of its unification strategy, North Korea was thus caught in a bind of its own devising.

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In response to the increasingly menacing fundamentals in its contest against the South, North Korea made a tactical decision in the 1980s to lean heavily on the Soviet Union. But far from stabilizing the "correlation of forces" in North Korea's favor, that ill-fated move actually precipitated the country's slide toward disaster. The break-up of the Soviet empire and the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics exposed North Korea to a more perilous balance of international power than it had ever dealt with before. As well, the collapse of the USSR meant the end of military aid and subsidized trade from the Soviet bloc. By the late 1980s North Korea was heavily dependent on those quantities; their consequent sudden and virtually complete termination sent the North Korean system into a steep downward spiral. Pyongyang has, as yet, been unable to arrest that spiral, and the grand vision of reuniting Korea under its socialist banner has given way to a desperate focus on day-to-day survival.

The Economic Race

THE FAILURE OF its unification strategy, we should remember, did *not* presuppose North Korea's economic failure. North Korea would have lost the economic race against the South—and thus eventually the opportunity to overpower it—even if it had maintained a steady and fairly respectable pace of growth. During its long contest against the South, however, the DPRK was unable even to sustain positive rates of economic growth. After apparently rapid progress in the two decades immediately following the Korean War, its economic growth seemed to slow markedly in the 1970s. By the 1980s the North Korean economy was stagnant; and in the 1990s it entered into a severe and as yet unremitting decline.

Although the precise dimensions of that decline are extremely difficult to estimate, the South Korean government is probably correct in asserting, as it recently did, that 1998 marked the ninth straight year of negative economic growth for the DPRK.[3] Indicative of the dimensions of that decline are North Korea's trade trends: between 1990 and 1998, according to reports by its trading partners, the DPRK's international purchases and sales of merchandise fell by more than half.[4] The severity of the decline is underscored by the hunger crisis it has provoked. While the precise dimensions of the crisis cannot yet be quantified, they are, at the very least, suggested by the simple fact that the North Korean call for emergency food aid from abroad is now entering its fifth year. Thus, even against the criterion of providing sustenance for the survival of the local populace—the most minimal standard for economic performance—the North Korean economy qualifies as a failure.

Initially, it might seem puzzling that the North Korean leadership has been incapable of arresting this prolonged economic tailspin. The country's dire condition, after all, is very largely the predictable consequence of the relentless enforcement of economic policies that range from the manifestly wasteful to the positively disastrous. Moderating that self-punishing regimen could be expected to bring an almost immediate measure of relief to the North's beleaguered economy.

The sorts of measures that might spark a revitalization of the North Korean economy are hardly secret. The path to renewal and resumed growth runs squarely through the international economy. For North Korea, as for every other country, international markets in goods, services and capital offer opportunities for reducing costs, improving productivity and promoting dynamism. In East Asia, the strategies of "outward orientation" and greater integration with the world economy—expanding trade, attracting foreign investment and

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[3] *Chungang Ilbo*, April 14, 1999; reprinted as "DPRK Said to Set Up 500 Mobile Phone Circuits in Najin", FBIS-EAS-1999-0414, April 14, 1999. The report was issued by the ROK Ministry of National Unification.

[4] Estimate derived from my North Korea International Commodity Trade database.

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encouraging technology transfers—have been common to all countries that have achieved impressive rates of long-term economic growth. Significantly, those ranks today include both China and Vietnam—Asia's two other avowedly socialist states.

WHY, THEN, has the DPRK leadership not seized those obvious options for remedying the economic catastrophe that so plainly confronts it? It is surely not for lack of calculation: North Korea's rulers, as already mentioned, appear to be quite rational in evaluating the alternatives before them—and, often, strikingly shrewd in seizing opportunities for gain.[5]

It is true that North Korea's ruling circles appear at times to be amazingly naive about economic affairs. (As recently as 1998, a visiting World Bank official was startled by a request from officials of the DPRK's central bank to explain the difference between macroeconomics and microeconomics.) But Pyongyang's continued reticence about embarking on a more pragmatic course cannot be attributed to economic innocence alone. Rather, it appears to be a deliberate and considered decision, one reflecting the DPRK leadership's assessment and understanding of its own political system.

North Korea's leaders appear to be convinced that programs for economic revival that are regarded as entirely unexceptional in the rest of the world would actually pose an extreme—possibly mortal—peril to their own system. Ruinous as North Korea's uninterrupted economic slide has proved for what DPRK officials call "our own style of socialism", the ostensible cures for the country's economic maladies are judged to be even more dangerous. Unfortunately, their assessment of their own predicament is on the mark, which means that they have little room for maneuver and few viable options at their disposal.

From Pyongyang's vantage point, the most compelling argument against moving in new economic directions is that those more "practical" policies would ultimately undermine the integrity and the stability of the socialist state. As it sees things, the fruits of "reform communism" are indicated by the fates of the Soviet and East European governments. Not surprisingly, North Korean authorities closely analyzed the final crisis and downfall of Soviet-bloc socialism. In their understanding—and who can dispute it—economic pragmatism and economic reform are antithetical to socialism, and any socialist government toying with such measures is in effect experimenting with its own political defeat. Kim Jong Il's 1992 comments on the Soviet *dénouement* would seem to offer a definitive official North Korean view of the event:

> One-step concessions and retreat from socialist principles have resulted in ten and a hundred step concessions and retreat, and, finally, invited grave consequences of ruining the working class parties themselves.[6]

The implicit corollary to that assessment, of course, is that the ordinary, unpoliced workings of the market—responding to incentives and all the rest—are inherently counterrevolutionary and fundamentally subversive of the socialist project. Kim Jong Il did not shrink from those implications; instead, as early as 1993 he spelled them out clearly and carefully:

> The basic driving force of development of a socialist society lies in . . . [the people's] ideological consciousness. . . . [In the past] there were tendencies to rouse people's enthusiasm for production by means of such material levers as economic incentives. . . . In those societies which gave up education in socialist ideology and encouraged egoism, the building of the socialist economy became stagnant . . . they went so far as denying the leadership of

[5]For a detailed exposition of North Korea's deft and highly rational calculations in the international arena, see Chuck Downs, *Over the Line: North Korea's Negotiating Strategy* (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 1999).

[6]*People's Korea*, February 15, 1992.

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the working-class party and state over the socialist economy.[7]

Since Kim Jong Il's formal accession as head of both party and state, North Korea's media have vociferously echoed and elaborated on that aspect of the "Dear Leader's" teachings. In September 1998—just days after the Supreme People's Assembly session that officially elevated Kim Jong Il to the state's "highest position"—the party's daily newspaper and its theoretical journal jointly ran this pronouncement on "economic reform", "economic opening" and "economic integration":

> It is a foolish daydream to try to revive the economy by introducing foreign capital, not relying on one's own strength. If one wants the prosperity of the national economy, he should thoroughly reject the idea of dependence on outside forces, the idea that he cannot live without foreign capital. . . .
>
> Ours is an independent economic structure equipped with all the economic sectors in good harmony and with its own strong heavy industry at the core. It is incomparably better than the export-oriented economic structure dependent on other countries. . . .
>
> We must heighten vigilance against the imperialists' moves to induce us to 'reform' and 'opening to the outside world.' 'Reform' and 'opening' on their lips are a honey-coated poison.[8]

Economic "reform" and "integration" would inevitably impel the North Korean state to relinquish its claim to absolute control over "the people's economy." But even worse, reform and opening would be vectors for what the North Korean authorities call "ideological and cultural infiltration."

The ROK's current policy toward Pyongyang is predicated on the premise that enhancing economic contacts between the two Koreas will modify the temperament of the DPRK and thus reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula. As Lim Dong-won, one of the policy's chief architects, recently explained, "The objective of President Kim's 'Sunshine Policy' of engagement with North Korea is to coax the Pyongyang leadership onto the path of reform and change."

North Korean authorities are well aware of that objective, and—as best one can tell from their pronouncements—are thoroughly hostile to it. At almost the same moment that Lim was outlining the rationale of Seoul's "sunshine" policy, North Korean authorities rendered their own verdict on "sunshine" and inter-Korean economic relations:

> Everyone knows that the puppets came forth with the sunshine policy, the engagement policy, and reciprocity, blocking North-South economic cooperation on every occasion. . . .
>
> It is all too clear that nonsense being carried out by the puppets regarding the issue of North-South economic cooperation is full of schemes and sophistry. The well-grounded logic of patriotism is bound to prevail over the treacherous logic.[9]

Such a posture is not an aberration for DPRK diplomacy; on the contrary, it conforms integrally with the basic logic of the North Korean state.

Thus, for example, a spokesman for the General Staff of the North Korean People's Army accused the United States of attempting "to destroy our socialist system" through an "'appeasement strategy' to induce us to 'reform' and 'opening'"—and that was by no means an isolated official comment. If the North Korean leadership truly views a more outward economic orientation as a threat to its vital interests, the mere lifting of U.S.

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[7]Korea Central News Agency Radio broadcast (Pyongyang), March 4, 1993; reprinted as "Kim Chong-Il Rejects 'Renegades' of Socialism", FBIS-EAS-93-042, March 5, 1993.

[8]"Let Us Adhere to Line of Building Independent National Economy"; joint article of *Nodong Sinmun* and *Kulloja*, September 17, 1998.

[9]*Nodong Sinmun*, April 22, 1999; reprinted as "Daily Lambasts ROK Minister for N-S Cooperation Remarks", FBIS-EAS-1999-0423, April 22, 1999.

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sanctions cannot be expected to herald the awakening of an economic relationship between the two countries.

To be more precise, the mere lifting of U.S. sanctions cannot be expected to herald the awakening of a *mutually beneficial* economic relationship between the two sides. For North Korea stands to gain substantial and continuing benefits from the United States only if Pyongyang can manage to formalize a one-sided economic relationship with Washington.

Tribute-Seeking Diplomacy

FOR THE DPRK, the United States is potentially a source for steady flows of bilateral foreign aid—and much more. Washington, for example, could assist in securing North Korean membership in the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other multilateral development institutions—organizations to which the DPRK could then apply for grants, subsidized loans and other forms of concessional finance. The United States could even facilitate bilateral payments to North Korea from other countries: a settlement with Japan modeled on the 1965 Tokyo-Seoul diplomatic normalization and indexed for parity with it, for instance, could by now involve billions of dollars.

For North Korea, in short, the promise of an "economic relationship" with the United States lies not in a broadening and deepening of commercial ties, but in establishing itself as a permanent recipient of government-to-government transfer payments.

At first glance it might seem that such a quest for financial aid would be doctrinally inconsistent with the "self-reliance" that North Korean *juche* extols. It is not. From its very founding, the DPRK has been embarked on a perpetual hunt for subventions from abroad. During the Cold War, it was the constant beneficiary of aid flows from almost the entire "socialist camp": China, the USSR, and almost every country in Eastern Europe were donors. Today, North Korea eyes the capitalist world for aid—and the DPRK has no ideological problem with pocketing payments from that reviled source. *Juche* diplomacy is a tribute-seeking diplomacy—an inversion of the traditional Korean role as tributary state in the old East Asian order—and all tribute is good tribute. Tribute not only strengthens the domestic sinews of the North Korean state, but also affirms its international status, validates its international policies, and legitimizes its international authority.

Tribute is overseas aid on terms established by the recipient, not the donor. To be in a position to dictate just how foreign beneficiaries should bestow their largesse, of course, requires considerable and reliable leverage. How to obtain that leverage? North Korea apparently believes that it can achieve it through a carefully managed stratagem of military extortion. By establishing itself as an ever more menacing international security threat, North Korea evidently means to compel its neighbors—and, even better, its enemies—to propitiate the DPRK with a constant and swelling stream of financial gifts.

That is not simply surmise. North Korea's intentions have been spelled out by its highest authorities. At the same September 1998 Supreme People's Assembly that elevated Kim Jong Il to the DPRK's "highest post of state", North Korea's government officially embraced a new policy objective: that of becoming a "powerful and prosperous state" (*Kangsong Taeguk*). The precise meaning of that slogan was articulated the following month in Pyongyang's *Minju Choson*, which declared that "defense capabilities are a military guarantee for national political independence and the self-reliant economy"; the paper further insisted that "*the nation can become prosperous only when the gun barrel is strong*" [emphasis added].

Credible military menace, in other words, is now at the heart of North Korea's economic strategy—and of its very strategy for survival. By extracting resources from the international community through military blackmail, the North Korean leadership hopes to stave off

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the officially dreaded specters of "reform" and "opening." That international gambit (complemented and reinforced by acute political and intellectual repression at home) offers what Pyongyang takes as its best chance to steer its imperiled vessel of state between the Scylla of political liberalization and the Charybdis of economic collapse. As an endgame stratagem, this is not entirely misbegotten. In fact, it may be said already to have enjoyed a measure of tactical success.

The 1994 "Agreed Framework", after all, was only signed by Washington because Pyongyang was poised to amass an arsenal of nuclear weapons. In exchange for an ostensible freeze on that program, the United States has been shipping the DPRK half a million tons a year of free oil. In addition, the United States organized an international consortium—the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization—to construct for North Korea two "safe" light-water nuclear reactors at an eventual cost of over four billion dollars; work on that project is already under way. Amazing as this may sound, the DPRK appears to be the largest recipient of American aid in all of East Asia.

North Korea has demonstrated, furthermore, that nuclear threats can be manufactured for new, additional payments, irrespective of previous understandings. After signing the Agreed Framework, the DPRK began work on an enormous underground site whose observed specifications closely matched those to be expected of a surreptitious effort to continue a program for the development of nuclear weaponry. After detecting that suspect facility, the United States naturally demanded access to it. Subsequent high-tension negotiations in late 1998 and early 1999 resulted in an American pledge of over five hundred thousand tons of food aid to the DPRK—and an almost simultaneous North Korean promise to allow an American delegation to "visit" the site at Kumchang-ri.[10]

At one particularly heated moment in the Kumchang-ri inspection negotiations, a North Korean military official declared:

> 'Surgical operation'-style attack and 'preemptive strike' are by no means an exclusive option of the United States. . . . It must be clearly known that there is no limit to the strike of our People's Army and that on this planet there is no room for escaping the strike.[11]

He was alluding to North Korea's long-range missile capabilities, whose latest advance was suddenly demonstrated in August 1998 by the firing—without advance warning—of a multistage ballistic rocket over the main island of Japan. (At this writing, North Korea is threatening the imminent launch of a new and improved ballistic missile—one that may at last be capable of reaching American soil.) That missile program happens to be another instrument through which Pyongyang intends to derive concessional payments from abroad.

In June 1998 North Korea's state media announced that the DPRK "will continue developing, testing, and deploying missiles" as a matter of unshakable principle—but proposed that "if the United States really wants to prevent our missile exports, it should . . . make a compensation for the losses to be caused by discontinued missile exports." In talks with American counterparts in early 1999, North Korean officials indicated that the "compensation" they had in mind would start out at one billion dollars a year.

Weapons of mass destruction are now the financial and political lifeline for that starving, decaying state. By the perverse logic of this design North Korea's vital interests lie in *magnifying* the deadly risks it can pose to the outside world. Perfecting weaponry with ever

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[10]American officials insisted there was no connection between the two announcements; North Korean officials referred to the food pledge as a "fee." In this case, the North Korean claim was closer to reality than Washington's—for without that food pledge there surely would have been no "visit" granted.

[11]Korean Central News Agency, "KPA will answer U.S. aggression forces' challenge with annihilating blow", December 2, 1998.

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greater reach and killing force correspondingly increases Pyongyang's scope for exacting international tribute. Just as business magnates in postwar South Korea strove to balloon their concerns into hypertrophied conglomerates that would be "too big to fail", so North Korea's leaders may be gambling that they can make the DPRK "too lethal to fail."

Thinking About the End

BUT THAT VISION—if indeed it is the vision that shapes Pyongyang's policy—is an empty fantasy. The DPRK's extortionist diplomacy is utterly inadequate to the task of revitalizing the economic foundation on which the state rests. In a world where South Korean export revenues exceed two billion dollars *a week*, the sums that North Korea schemes to obtain are almost negligible. Under any circumstances, those sums would be insufficient to purchase a new industrial infrastructure, or to prepare a work force for manning it, especially when extensive commercial and technical contacts with the outside world are unacceptable. North Korea's endgame stratagem promises only to slow the country's relative and absolute economic decline, not to reverse it. At the very best, that game plan will only extend the ghastly, deepening twilight in which the regime is already enveloped.

If I am correct that the DPRK is slated for still further decline, and correct as well about the logic of the North Korean system, the implications for the international community are ominous indeed. More than any other state in the current global order, the DPRK makes its living not through the export of goods and services, but through the methodical export of strategic insecurity. Furthermore, the DPRK's vital interests would be grievously and irreparably injured if its government were ever to acquiesce in what the international community desires very most: first, a real and permanent halt to its quest for nuclear weaponry; second, a demobilization of its program for perfecting long-range missiles; and third, the establishment of genuinely peaceful relations with the ROK.

That is not to say that Pyongyang might not some day commit to one or more of those courses. Leaders can miscalculate, and, often enough, do. But if North Korea's rulers—as they have so often stated—are resolved not to follow Gorbachev gently into the night, then we can only conclude that every extension of the regime's tenure will be marked by a corresponding improvement in Pyongyang's ability to inflict injury and provoke instability beyond its borders.

And yet, as North Korea fails, the international community moves to intervene with support. For Pyongyang, that is a highly satisfactory arrangement. It is less clear why it should be satisfactory to other governments. Wittingly or not, the principal powers with which North Korea interacts have fallen into a de facto policy of appeasement toward Pyongyang.

As a diplomatic approach, appeasement has recorded some successes at different junctures over the course of history, but only when the objects of that policy were capable of, and disposed toward, being appeased. In the DPRK, there is every reason to believe that the world community is dealing with an insatiable state.

WHY, THEN, is appeasement taking place? If one were utterly cynical, one might say that this is easy enough to explain: weak governments have a predilection for appeasement policies, and the governments with which North Korea today contends are, in the main, weak ones. That conclusion cannot be dismissed out of hand, for the fact of the matter is that North Korea currently faces a most unusual international alignment. The governments crucial to its international calculations have always been China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States. Since the end of the Cold War, the character of each of those governments has changed perceptibly—in some cases, radically. By comparison with their predecessors, the administrations now

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presiding in Beijing, Tokyo, Moscow, Seoul and Washington are either less capable of mobilizing resources to project national will abroad, less oriented toward international (as opposed to domestic) priorities, or less inclined to focus attention on long-term problems—or, in some cases, all of those things. This extraordinary conjuncture has doubtless played to North Korea's advantage.

A kinder analysis might ascribe the current appeasement of the DPRK less to a failure of nerve than to a failure of imagination. Conceptualizing the Korean Peninsula within a two-state framework almost ineluctably leads international policymakers to guard the North Korean system against its own decline—even though such support may ultimately worsen the security threats that those policymakers can expect to face in the future. For the stability and prosperity of Northeast Asia—and regions far beyond—it is therefore imperative for concerned governments to get out of the intellectual sand trap from which a Korean Peninsula without the DPRK cannot be seen. We must begin to think carefully about the implications, problems and opportunities inherent in a post-DPRK Korea.

This is not an impossible exercise. One can easily envision a less troubled Korean Peninsula than the one we know today. Korean unification under a peaceable, politically free, market-oriented system—a system much like South Korea's today—would contribute immeasurably to political stability and economic prosperity, not only in Northeast Asia but well beyond it.

To be sure, we can expect arduous challenges and serious obstacles to any effort to construct a post-DPRK architecture for the Korean Peninsula. But prepared governments may have ways to mitigate them or circumvent them altogether. Indeed, the costs and difficulties attendant in establishing a successful post-North Korean order in Northeast Asia will very likely climb the longer the current regime remains in power.

Throughout its tenure, the DPRK has demonstrated its continuing capacity to surprise, usually in unpleasant ways. In the period ahead, more such surprises undoubtedly await us. They will be distinctly less unpleasant if our citizens and statesmen do not take the end of North Korea to be an unimaginable proposition. □

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American Ascendancy

And the Pretense of Concert

Coral Bell

LIKE A SUDDEN flash of diplomatic lightning, Kosovo has illuminated much that was previously obscure in the landscape of international politics. Not because of the victory over Milosevic—it would indeed be a cold day if NATO could not vanquish a minor power—but because a norm has been forcefully asserted, a Western norm with explosive potentialities for many other sovereign states. And because NATO has made its debut as the military arm of a concert of powers.

During the 1990s, the United States has mostly tiptoed through the current unipolar structure of the society of states with a sort of ponderous tact, like a benign Ferdinand-type bull making its way delicately around a china shop of unknown value. That prudence has been well justified: the situation is still quite new and of uncertain import to all the world's policymakers. History is not much help, for no equal degree of unipolarity has existed since the high point of the Roman world, almost two millennia ago.[1] The central balance of power had set the main agenda of world politics for more than five centuries: its "intermission", even for a time whose length remains a matter of speculation, is a truly transformatory event, and foreign affairs bureaucracies tend to be nervous of such upheavals.

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The level or depth of that transformation must depend on the duration of the unipolar "moment", as it was originally labeled by Charles Krauthammer. If it had actually been just a "moment" (even one coming up toward ten years, as it now is), any changes in world order might have proved marginal or ephemeral. But I propose to argue that it will last at least another four decades or so, and possibly a great deal longer, though that will depend on Washington's choice of strategies. Such a duration would be enough to set in concrete changes that have already begun to modify some of the oldest and most basic norms and conventions that previously governed the society of states.

The Lingering "Moment"

BEFORE assessing those changes, what are the arguments for expecting so long a duration of this phase of diplomatic history? They turn primarily on the economic, military and diplomatic "distance" that the five or so assumed potential challengers to

[1] Christopher Layne has suggested parallels with Britain's ascendancy in the late nineteenth century and France's in the late seventeenth. See his "The Unipolar Illusion", *International Security* (Spring 1993). But the differences increasingly seem greater than the similarities. Both countries were in their times *primus inter pares*, first among equals. But where are America's equals in power now?

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America's current ascendancy—its prospective "peer competitors"—must travel before they could have plausible grounds for making such a challenge. That in turn means considering briefly the qualifications necessary for membership in an eventual multipolar or bipolar balance, when and if one replaces the present unipolar structure.

These qualifications are not very different from those possessed by the members of past central balances, allowing the differences in scale between the European society of states of the nineteenth century and the global society of the twenty-first. The latter will be a society of giants. Extensive territory, population and resources; high economic and technological skills; adequate political and social cohesion; advanced military muscle (especially power projection capacity) and the willingness to use it; organizational and administrative capacity for rapid decision-making in crisis; and (most crucially) capacity to induce the behavior known as "bandwagoning"—that is, joining what is calculated to be the winning side—by other powers will all be necessary. And potential motivation must be considered alongside potential capacity.

Almost every commentator has for some years been regarding China as the likeliest of the usual suspects for future "peer competitor" status. The interests of Washington and Beijing seem to be on a possible collision course in East Asia and the China Seas, to a degree not really paralleled by America's relationships with major powers in its other spheres of interest. The survival of Taiwan, the fate of the two Koreas, the U.S. alliance with Japan, the visibility of U.S. troops in the area, the even greater visibility of U.S. naval forces (as in the 1996 crisis in the Taiwan Strait), the prospects of a Theatre Missile Defense system possibly covering Taiwan and Japan, and the resented American pressures on human rights (concerning not only China itself but, still more, Tibet) are all likely to continue creating frictions and irritations.

On the "future capabilities" side, China seems prospectively more formidable than other potential competitors. Its population, territory and resources provide the foundation of that impression. The spectacular rate of Chinese economic growth in the last few decades has inevitably reinforced this. China's level of technical and economic competence has also been impressive. And a party autocracy like that in Beijing (assuming it survives) has an inherent advantage in making rapid, ruthless decisions during crisis, as in 1989.

Conceding all that, China's shadow is often greater than even its very real substance warrants. For some decades to come, its apparent strengths will be offset by less apparent weaknesses. The rapidity of its economic growth has often led analysts to pass over the immense structural difficulties and imbalances of the Chinese economy: for instance, the problem of restructuring loss-making state industries, the great inequalities between the prosperous coastal zones and the still bitterly poor interior, the weakness of the banking sector, the inadequate development of commercial law, the rushed urbanization, and the truly awesome fact of more than one hundred million unemployed in the labor force. As well, the ability to sell into the American market will remain vital to the foreign exchange reserves that enable China to buy essential commodities, weapons and technologies. Normal trading status, previously called most favored nation status, will therefore remain a vulnerable asset. Most oil supplies for China still come from the Middle East, and could at present readily be interdicted. The political control the Beijing regime wields over its territory and peripheral areas is potentially fragile.

On the military side, though China has bought and/or copied some advanced Russian platforms (aircraft and submarines) and perhaps garnered a few American secrets, its defense establishment still has a very long way to go before it will be able to look sideways at the 7th fleet, except perhaps very close to the Chinese coast. There are clear signs that China's strategists are well aware of the limits of their power projection capacity, even as

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against Taiwan.[2] They have made no effort in recent decades to retake the islands Qemoy and Matsu, held by Taiwan since 1949. Official awareness of China's current strategic weakness may even be seen in the interest that young Chinese strategists are allowed to take in the "revolution in military affairs" (RMA), the forward edge of advanced American strategic thinking.[3] If the Chinese defense establishment is conscious of having no chance of catching up with the present generation of American weapons systems, or even the next generation, it is clearly logical for it to concentrate on a more distant strategic future, which means the weaponry envisaged in the RMA. Since a weapons generation these days lasts at least fifteen years, that would put "peer competitor" status on hold until about forty-five years hence.

BUT THERE ARE a couple of other considerations that are perhaps even more powerful. The first is what I would call the "Soviet warning." The Soviet Union strove to compete militarily with the United States for the whole forty-three years of the Cold War, channeling as much as 20 percent of its GNP per annum into that effort. The result was not only failure and almost irreparable economic damage, but the loss of Communist Party control of the government. The party autocracy in Beijing seems unlikely to risk that fate for itself. Defense modernization may be getting rather more funds than it did earlier, but it is still not at the top of the regime's priority list, and is unlikely to get there any time soon.

The final consideration is China's restricted ability to induce bandwagoning by other powers, a factor that becomes very relevant when we consider the next two potential challengers to U.S. supremacy. Russia must obviously still be regarded in that light, even though its conventional forces (on the evidence in Chechnya and elsewhere) seem to be in a terminal state of decline and its nuclear strike force is dangerously ill-kept.[4] How long will it be before it recovers from its present disasters? Again, the answer seems to be at least three or four decades.

The most puzzling question in recent history is why a loss of ideological faith and confidence among the Soviet political elite (not even the actual replacement of the elite, because most of the current Russian oligarchy are old communist apparatchiks, from the president down) seems to have produced ruin in almost every aspect of Russian life, right down to the sewerage system. It is as if the "achievements" of the Soviet period had suddenly proved to be nothing more than a seventy year-long Potemkin village, whose collapsed facade has left the Russia of Dostoyevsky's time visible again. For it to pose a challenge, a modern economy has to be created out of the current "robber capitalism", along with infrastructure, a workable administration and a modernized defense establishment with state-of-the-art weaponry. Not only is it difficult to see those tasks being accomplished rapidly, it is difficult to believe they will be accomplished at all.

But the new/old Russia, though far from able to fill the strategic shoes of the vanished Soviet Union, possesses one asset from its past that may prove relevant and valuable in the present unipolar structure. Nineteenth-century Russia was a founding member of, and an enthusiastic participant in, the old European concert of powers (1815-1914). I believe that an understanding of that system in Moscow (for which Russians need only consult their own diplomatic history) will be useful again in due course, perhaps only to

[2]For two detailed, expert and differing analyses of China's military capabilities, see Bates Gill and Michael O'Hanlon, "China's Hollow Military", *The National Interest* (Summer 1999); and James Lilley and Carl Ford, "China's Military: A Second Opinion", in this issue.

[3]See Michael Pillsbury, ed., *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997).

[4]See Anatol Lieven, "Russia's Military Nadir: The Meaning of the Chechen Debacle", *The National Interest* (Summer 1996).

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Russia, but perhaps also to the West and the longer survival of unipolarity.

Japan would hardly warrant mentioning in this context were it not for all those books and articles of a decade ago about "Japan as Number One." Those prophecies seem now to have been based on nothing more substantial than the assumptions that comparative rates of economic growth were the only factor that needed to be taken into consideration when assessing the future balance of power, and that Japan would grow at 9 percent (and China at 10 percent) forever. In reality, Japan has only had two of the requisites for "peer competitor" status: technological and economic competence, and political cohesion. Its territorial and resource endowments are sparse, its population aging faster than most, and its capacity for crisis decision-making unimpressive. Its armed forces have near state-of-the-art weaponry, but national willingness to deploy them, even in peacekeeping operations, remains low. Japan sits, non-nuclear and without strategic depth, at the junction of the spheres of interest of three nuclear powers—the United States, China and Russia—and, in the form of a reunited Korea, a possible fourth. That is a vulnerable situation, and more vulnerable now and prospectively than it was during the Cold War.

Chinese forces, when they are eventually full-grown, will be deployed in the general vicinity of Japan—the China Seas, the Chinese coast—in a way that was never true of Soviet forces during the Cold War. If push had ever come to shove in that struggle, it would have been the Western allies who would have borne the first shock. All that changed when China rather than Russia inherited the Soviet mantle as the likeliest challenger to U.S. ascendancy. So it is not at all surprising that Japan has clung more firmly to the U.S. bandwagon since the end of the Cold War than it did during earlier decades. The bilateral 1997 defense agreement commits Japan to more active participation with the United States in East Asia than was earlier the case. That is a mark of an increased sense of vulnerability among the Japanese elite, and of reduced leverage within the alliance.

The Most Likely Challenge

THE EUROPEAN situation is quite different. Though the endemic Balkan troubles are a source of anguish, and will probably go on being so, no plausible *major* military threat seems to be impending on the European horizon. Even if Russian military power revives at an improbable rate, the strategic advantages that the Soviet Union enjoyed in Eastern Europe for almost forty-five years cannot be reasserted without hegemonic war. According to all informed reports, Russia's nuclear capacity (once credited with being on a par with that of the United States) is much impaired. The conventional forces that once made Europe tremble are visibly in great disrepair. Despite all this the Europeans (except sometimes the French) still cling, almost as much as the Japanese, to the American bandwagon. They show few signs of ever seeking to elevate themselves to the status of a military "peer competitor" of the United States.

Nevertheless, in terms of most of the qualifications outlined earlier, Europe is still the only feasible potential rival for the United States in the next three or four decades. Its economy is about the same size (and will grow larger with new members), its technology almost as advanced, its diplomatic traditions longer. It includes two nuclear powers with adequate stockpiles and sophisticated delivery systems. It deploys large conventional forces with near state-of-the-art equipment and with considerable experience in working together. (Kosovo, however, vividly demonstrated the difference between *near* and *actual* states-of-the-art. Not only were more than 70 percent of the sorties American, but just about all of them were dependent on U.S. surveillance and location systems.)

Europe's only real deficit, when viewed as a potential rival to the United States, is its low capacity for decision-making, particularly in

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times of crisis. The evolution of events in Bosnia illustrated that painfully well. Even at their most beleaguered, as during the Clinton impeachment hearings, Washington's decision-making mechanisms are infinitely more effective than those in Brussels. That might seem like a temporary condition, easily and soon to be remedied. But it is not: it is intrinsic not only to the present stage of the great enterprise on which the Europeans are embarked, but to the most probable outcome of that enterprise, the making of "Europe."

The original "Europe of the Six" might possibly have turned into a convincing federation, a "United States of Europe." But the prospective "Europe of the Twenty-plus" will surely be a confederation, probably an economically powerful and prosperous one, with the euro, despite its teething troubles, becoming the major rival to the dollar. But confederations do not exactly have an impressive record of joint decision-making in crisis. So in terms of developing either the capacity or motivation to challenge U.S. ascendancy, the new Europe seems likely to prove a non-starter. There will of course be endemic frictions between the future economic giants on either side of the Atlantic, and plenty of cultural resentment at both the elite and grassroots levels. But when have there not been? Ever since the rise of U.S. power at the end of the nineteenth century, the "Johnny-come-lately" on the other side of the Atlantic has been getting under the skin of the Europeans. But the resentments were much greater in the early decades of this century than after the beginning of the Cold War. European governments since then have known well where their strategic bread is buttered. They are not about to blow the advantages of transatlantic alliance because of a trade row over bananas.

Kosovo showed that very well. Even the French went along with Washington's strategies with hardly a murmur. There was of course a wide spectrum of political and diplomatic opinion within the alliance, with Britain at the "hawk" end, and Greece (an old ally of Serbia) at the "dove" end. The arguments about whether to send in ground forces in combat mode or merely in peace-enforcement mode may have been real, but more probably were just an assiduous piece of crisis-signaling to increase the psychological pressure on Belgrade. The truth of that may not be known for some time, but despite the last-ditch resistance of some army die-hards, "distance warfare" does seem to have shown its capacities, and certainly confirmed the indispensable role of U.S. advanced weaponry, even for Europe.

I would argue, then, that both the Europeans and the Japanese are likely for the foreseeable future to remain on the American bandwagon, valuing the benefits of the alliance with Washington above any advantages they might secure by playing their own respective diplomatic hands. And so long as that remains the case, a true multipolar central balance, such as many analysts were envisaging before the completeness of the Russian collapse became apparent, is not on the cards.

The likeliest successor to the current unipolar structure, therefore, is a new *bipolar* balance, with a recovered Russia and a militarily and economically developed China reviving the old Moscow-Beijing alliance of 1950 (despite its many difficulties) and probably recruiting quite a few allies, mostly from the Islamic world. In traditional terms, the "status quo" alliance (the United States, Europe and Japan) will still command much greater economic and military power than such a "revisionist" alliance. But the overall situation will be uncomfortably like the early Cold War balance of 1949-62, the most dangerous phase in the tension-ridden four decades of that conflict.

The Pretense of Concert

MOST WESTERNERS (though by no means everyone else) would agree that such a phase should if possible be averted. And it can be, if Washington formulates its diplomatic strategies well enough. Fortunately, there is already visible a policy to that end, one that is equally acceptable to the

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mainstream foreign policy elites in both political parties, though perhaps not to their respective far-left and far-right fringes.

It is the strategy that seems already to have been adopted by the Clinton administration: *the unipolar world should be run as if it were a concert of powers.* In a sense, the post-World War II "institutionalization" of diplomacy—through the UN, NATO, the G-7, the WTO, the World Bank, the IMF, the OSCE and so on—has more or less imposed that strategy on policymakers. Resolutions must get through the Security Council and consensus must be sought in the other organizations to "legitimate" the policies that are deemed to be in the U.S. national interest. Of course, the policies could be followed without seeking their legitimation by "the international community", but the advantages of securing it are worth the diplomatic labor it takes. A resolution or consensus eases consciences both in America and abroad, and helps protect U.S. allies from their respective critics at home (though not in Washington, of course).

What a viable, long-term concert of powers strategy requires first is to strengthen and even widen existing alliances (as with the Clinton defense agreement with Japan and the ongoing expansion of NATO), and second, to draw the once and possible future adversary, Russia, into the circle of the concert, exactly as France was recruited into the original Concert of Europe only three years after the defeat of Napoleon.

It will instantly be objected that one of the assumed desiderata, the eastward expansion of NATO, is at odds with another aim—securing agreement from the Russian leadership that its national interest is best forwarded by diplomatic identification with the Western powers. That clash of objectives does exist at the moment, and may well persist for at least as long as Yeltsin remains the effective though erratic decisionmaker in Moscow. But one should also remember a widely practiced though seldom acknowledged diplomatic maxim: "If you can't beat them, join them." Russia has no God-given right to determine the diplomatic, political or economic choices of the Central European powers, as it did during the Cold War. If Moscow is obliged to abandon all hope of reasserting that sphere of control or influence, the option of securing the best deal it can through membership of the Western concert becomes the more appealing.

As was mentioned earlier, the old Russia had a century's experience of how to operate in a concert system. Its historians and probably its policy planners will therefore be well aware of the advantages that accrue to the "balancer" (the "swing voter") in such a system. In the old European system those advantages were enjoyed by Britain, but in the twenty-first century (though not until its later decades) they would logically fall to Russia, as the ambivalent state between two prospective coalitions. Washington's policies (economic, diplomatic and strategic) will be major factors in deciding how Moscow's ambivalences are resolved. It must be made clear that the economic and even strategic advantages of being part of the "Vancouver to Vladivostok" grouping (a phrase that James Baker used to use) could be very real. They should eventually include both close affiliation with the EU and membership in NATO.

Kosovo and the New Norms

BUT, IT MIGHT be asked, what is in all this for America? Well, primarily, the further extension of the phase of unipolarity beyond the forty years or so that I have been assuming in this article. The current U.S. alliance structure (the American bandwagon of its European and Japanese allies, plus assorted others) is already an immense concentration of power. If Russia can be recruited into it on a reasonably long-term basis, the likelihood of any effective challenge would retreat into the remote future. The Pax Americana, in terms of its duration, might thus become more like the Pax Romana than the Pax Britannica.

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The stress on peace has a real relevance. The primary virtue of unipolarity is that it inhibits capacity to make war at several levels. At the widest level (hegemonic war, Armageddon-style war, or what Sam Huntington calls "civilizational" war), the great preponderance of power on the side of the status quo inhibits challenge by any rational decisionmaker. On the most local level, that same preponderance of power should in time (when all the implications sink in) make it possible to convince others that launching hostilities may not be a good idea, for their own societies or for themselves personally. Of course, such a concert is not yet fully established, and there will probably always remain some regional autocrat like Saddam Hussein who will "chance his arms" locally, and some powers like India and Pakistan that are too big to bully. Nevertheless, the likelihood of war in a unipolar system is much less than in either a bipolar or a multipolar balance. And it is worth preserving on that basis alone.

There is, however, another factor with still more capacity to transform the whole structure and future of the society of states. Unipolarity promotes the rapid emergence, and even the prospective enforcement, of a new set of norms governing the behavior of states. In doing so, it undoubtedly erodes the traditional concept of state sovereignty. The basic norm of the Westphalian society of states (from 1648) was *cuius regio, eius religio*; that is (loosely translated), "the ruler is entitled to make the rules in his own domain." That concept of sovereignty has been gradually circumscribed since the beginning of this century, and more rapidly in the past fifty years. In the past ten years (i.e., in this phase of unipolarity), it has been still more rapidly eroded.

The new norms are, in effect, Wilsonian rather than Westphalian. Eighty years after his disastrous defeat in 1920, the ghost of Woodrow Wilson bestrides the world. In particular, his maxim "Every people is entitled to choose the sovereignty under which it shall live" is the principle (whether they know it or not) behind every separatist insurgency from the Kosovars and the Kurds to the East Timorese and the Irian Jayans—even, in a more subdued way, behind the aspirations of Scottish nationalists and Quebecois. The assumption that any ethnic group with a territorial base of its own is entitled to sovereignty is widespread and easily cultivated. It is also, of course, the potential source of an infinity of trouble for the future society of states.[5]

Kosovo offers a useful example. In effect, what happened was that a dissident province of Yugoslavia was able to enlist the sympathies of the West to a degree that induced the NATO powers to mount a major military campaign against the sovereignty under which the Kosovars had lived (and often died). The current settlement gives Kosovo only autonomy, not full independence or sovereignty. But the final outcome is still in the lap of history, and it is unlikely that it will be friendly to Belgrade.

Moscow and Beijing could hardly fail to notice the potential application to their own problems (Chechnya, Tibet, Taiwan) of the moralistic universalism inherent in Western policy. Neither could a great many other countries, for the world is full of dissident provinces that aspire to autonomy or even sovereignty. But for Moscow and Beijing there was an extra turn of the screw in the case of Kosovo, in that the Security Council veto was impotent to block Western action. The concert of powers, whose diplomatic face is sometimes but not necessarily the Security Council, went ahead anyway. The military arm of the concert, which is NATO, proved equal to the task, and its economic arm, which is the G-7, was a powerful adjunct. Both Russia and China at present need the West profoundly, China mostly for the American market, Russia for international aid. So though both governments had very real reasons for anger and resentment against Western policy in Kosovo, and quite a few

[5]This subject, too large to explore here, is examined at length in my forthcoming book, *World Out of Balance*.

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other grudges against the West as well, both acquiesced. Indeed, Russia provided considerable help in pulling Western chestnuts out of the fire.

All that must surely be seen as no end of a lesson in the international politics of unipolarity—and in the potentialities of a concert of powers, which is at present exclusively Western, but does not necessarily have to remain so. As I said earlier, there is always that useful old maxim, "If you can't beat them, join them." The Clinton policymakers deserve more credit than they have got for leaving that option visibly open, especially to Russia. For those who listened carefully, the "soft answer that turneth away wrath" was frequently audible during the crisis.

Kosovo has also been a powerful lesson in how the new norms (which have originated in the international community rather than the society of states) operate to erode the traditional concept of sovereignty. So do many other recent episodes. For example, the government of Chile, nowadays a fairly respectable democracy, does not want General Pinochet to be put on trial for misdeeds committed mostly in his own country. Yet Her Majesty's Lords of Appeal in Ordinary (of all people) in Britain have at least ensured that he has been confined under house arrest for some months, as a token of moral reprobation by much of the world. A decade after the Gulf War, Iraqi sovereignty is far more truncated (sanctions, no-fly zones, arms inspectors) than Germany's was ten years after either the Kaiser's war or Hitler's war.

To point these things out is not to disapprove of them. Rather, my point is just how much they are at odds with the traditional norms that had governed the society of states for centuries until this decade, and how well they illustrate the workings of a concert of powers, usually at present referred to as "the international community." In other words, the new norms (especially the human rights and environmental ones) legitimate Great Power intervention in the crises of lesser powers to a degree seldom envisaged in previous diplomatic history. The favorable way of interpreting this is as a moralizing of international politics. The unfavorable way is as "cultural imperialism" or even as "collective colonialism." Whichever of those views one takes, it has to be recognized as a truly radical change in the way the society of states works, and one inherent in the structure of unipolarity. So Washington's current and immediate future generations of diplomatic strategists have as large an opportunity (and as complex a set of tactical choices) before them as those of 1946-47. They will need to work as hard and as creatively.

Round Up the Usual Euphemisms

I AM OF course conscious that many Americans will regard the sort of future I am forecasting for their country with alarm and revulsion, from a mix of prudential and moral concerns admirably conveyed in a recent *Foreign Affairs* discussion of "whether American hegemony is working."

Unfortunately, the old concert of powers got a bad press in America during the nineteenth century, and seems never to have recovered from it in popular opinion. So one could not expect any official person to use that term: the usual euphemism, "the international community", will no doubt continue to be used even in a case like the NATO operations in the Kosovo crisis, for which even the flimsy cloak of "universality" provided by a Security Council resolution could not be secured. Mere differences in semantic usage and historical upbringing are at the root of many of the arguments in this field, and undoubtedly in some cases the language obscures reality.

The word "unipolarity" is itself a case in point: it carries an unwanted baggage of triumphalism and solitude. Samuel Huntington suggests the coinage "uni-multipolar." That is, in substance, not much at odds with my image of a unipolar world that is and must be operated as if it were a concert of powers. Both underline the importance of Washington's

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ability to secure and maintain bandwagoning by the current major powers and those of the future. But the crucial point for understanding the potentialities and challenges of the current phase of international history remains the recognition that the central balance of power (that set the agenda of world politics for so many centuries) is at present in abeyance, and that the duration of this highly exceptional phase will be either lengthened or shortened by Washington's choices. The parallel implies another with 1946: the strategy of containment was more or less maintained for the next forty-three years and (despite some very painful errors along the way) produced in time a remarkable transformation in the society of states, to wit the present phase of unipolarity. A "concert" strategy, like the "containment" strategy, will need great tactical flexibility and lots of careful diplomatic judgment. But to those of us who can remember how dangerous the world looked in 1946, and how many obstacles the strategy then adopted had to face, the problems of the foreseeable future do not seem insurmountable.

That is never how it looks at the time, of course, and one is bound to feel a wry sympathy for Warren Christopher's remark, in a television interview just before he left office, "Everyone's crisis tends to become our crisis." But that degree of universalism is not inevitable. The cultivation of allies among regional as well as major powers can enable Washington to spread (and sometimes shed) the burden.

A Comfortable Habit

REVERTING BRIEFLY to my earlier argument that the present degree of unipolarity has no equivalent more recent than the palmy days of the Roman world, that comparison actually understates the current level of U.S. advantage. For the Roman world coexisted with the great civilizations of China and India, which were hardly touched by it, and the rival empire of Parthia (roughly the contemporary area centered on Iran and Iraq), which was never subdued. The U.S. sphere of cultural influence has no predecessor in its global reach.

There is, however, one other notable point of comparison: the way in which the two paramount powers reached their respective degrees of ascendancy. The great Scottish philosopher David Hume, in his essay on the balance of power, points out the connection between the extension of Roman control and the absence of any countervailing balance of power strategy:

> It must be owned that the Romans never met with any such combination or confederacy against them as might naturally have been expected . . . till they extended their dominion over the whole known world. It appeared afterwards (nor was it difficult to be observed at the time) that this was a contest for universal empire, yet no prince or state seems to have been in the least alarmed about the event or issue of the quarrel.[6]

The rise of American ascendancy (looking back to its beginnings just a century ago) seems to owe a good deal to the same phenomenon: no serious balance of power was ever attempted against it. The traditional fulcrum of such a strategy in the European society of states has of course been Britain, and British governments ever since the Venezuela crisis of 1895 have in effect refused to allow themselves to be at enmity with the United States. Concern for the security of Canada made that stance originally judicious, and it became a habit: the "special relationship."

The bandwagoning of the Europeans and the Japanese with Washington has had a lot in common with that patch of history. A strategy judiciously adopted at a time of threat has become a comfortable habit. And one whose preservation is vital to the world's future. □

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[6]David Hume, "Of the balance of power", in *Theory and Practice of the Balance of Power (1486-1914)*, ed. Moorhead Wright (London: Dent, 1975).

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Toward an English-Speaking Union

Robert Conquest

THE FEDERAL EUROPE now metastasizing away suffers from several substantial defects. It is divisive of the West, and indeed divisive of "European" civilization itself, which has always included the Europes Overseas. It is implicitly—and often explicitly—anti-American. It is already, with the promise of worse to come, a scene of extreme regulationism and of a Continental administrative outlook contrary to the Common Law tradition. But most of all, and fatally, what it misses is any real sense of how the feeling of citizenship arises. That feeling cannot simply be elicited by appeals or compulsions on behalf of a supra-national entity. We are still, after all, in a period where it is difficult enough to get Fleming to lie down with Walloon, let alone Croat with Serb.

The "European" answer to this is that a supra-national European state or federation will be a vehicle by which the forces of goodwill can prevent nationalist eruptions. But how? To say that a larger federal unit, once created, will provide a counterattraction to nationalism, that it will win in the political field, is sheer speculation—and a speculation not justified by the experience of other multinational federations. (It is rather like arguing that a house, once erected, will proceed to dig its own foundations.) The world has seen many such arrangements break up—not only the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia but the United Arab Republic and the Federation of the West Indies and Malaysia. Indeed, one might add in this century the union of Sweden and Norway, and of Austria and Hungary; and, earlier, two separate attempts to form a Central American union.

The European Idea is at once both obsolete and premature. It is obsolete in the sense that the physical propinquity, the cartological tidiness on which the whole idea so largely rests, is no longer anything like as important as it once was. It is premature in the sense that the political cultures of Europe are not yet similar, or assimilable, enough for what is intended—while there are other more closely related cultures whose connection should take precedence.

If we seek something better than what exists, it seems sensible to turn to a grouping that would be natural rather than artificial, going with the cultural grain rather than cutting across it. It hardly needs saying that what comes to mind is some form of unity between countries of the same legal and political—and linguistic and cultural—traditions: which is to say an Association of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—as well as, it is to be hoped, Ireland and the peoples of the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean.

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For within the West, it is above all the English-speaking community that has over the centuries pioneered and then maintained the middle way between anarchy and despotism. In most of the rest of the world, in the past as now, this balance has failed. (A great Chinese historian once despairingly wrote of his countrymen that their history alternated between periods when they were enslaved and periods when they wished they were.)

The praise of the eighteenth-century British constitution voiced by the French statesman Jacques Necker—that Britain's was the only government in the world "which united public strength with individual security"—identifies the defining point of the system we now describe loosely as democracy. Today, the same can be said of the United States and the other countries listed above. We are used to our inheritance. We think it natural and normal that we enjoy the civil and other liberties common to our countries, and we rightly complain about their defects or inadequacies. But our order is not that which has commonly or widely prevailed—as a look at the present-day world should be enough to remind us. We are, through the luck of our history, the main bastion against the various barbarisms that have reared their heads so devastatingly in the past half century. Nor need we forget that in World War II those areas of Europe and Asia that were indeed liberated, and not turned over to another despotism, were liberated in the European case mainly by the combined arms of the United States, Britain and Canada; in the Asian case mainly by the combined arms of the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

The difficulties of bringing even these countries into an Association are clearly great. But they are, in principle, petty ones, arising from a tangle of detailed interests, thoughts and habits. Though of course there are many differences, the situation in some ways resembles that which faced the American Federalists in the 1780s. At the lower level, everything was against them. It seemed almost impossible that, in spite of their common heritage of law and liberty, a general unity could prevail in thirteen democracies over such a mesh of legalisms and local interests as then existed. The weaknesses, the disintegrative tendencies were obvious enough to provide material for countless Cassandras. But a man like Benjamin Franklin could see through them to the basic strength and unity. And, just as it was precisely the crumbling of the old American confederation—the backbiting and worse between the states—that induced the Federalists to make the effort for unity, so today's problems should act as the same sort of stimulus on us.

It is a mistake to imagine that only revolutionaries and utopians are capable of strong and radical action. Where great changes are needed in the interest of stability and progress, men of vision have not seldom been available to press them through. In the 1780s, events in America were not allowed to drift on in an unsatisfactory fashion, in the direction of disintegration and impoverishment. The difficulties were diagnosed and the opportunities seized.

The End of the Tyranny of Distance

WHAT, THEN, are the difficulties faced by today's advocates of a greater English-speaking union? Until now, whenever the subject has been broached (and it is worth recalling that in a nebulous form it was in the air as early as a century ago) it has been argued that the distances separating North America, Australia and Britain rule out political union. But that argument now fails. The thousand-mile spread of the American States in the eighteenth century was, in its effect, far greater than is the twelve thousand-mile spread of the countries of our culture today. Caesar Rodney rode through the whole night to arrive in Philadelphia to cast the vital vote for the Declaration of Independence. Today a helicopter would get him there in half an hour. At that period it took two days to get from New York merely to Philadelphia by John Barnell's "flying machine", and five

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to Baltimore; and that was one of the better connections. Nowadays, statesmen and businessmen can get from London to Canberra in a day, while communication by internet or telephone is instantaneous.

Even at a time when it took months to reach it, the British were able to maintain close political connections with New Zealand right across the globe. Yet now, when London can speak to Auckland or Adelaide instantaneously and when it is possible to get from one to the other in a day, the British are told that their natural political contacts are with Europe. Europe is indeed nearer in the crudest physical sense, but ours is precisely the era when travel and communication have made that measure less significant than it has ever been in human history. For what the Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey called, in the context of the history of his own country, "the tyranny of distance" is now effectively vanquished.

The obstacles of geography, then, are grossly exaggerated. What about those of nationalism and ethnicity? First, let us note well that the crucial links between the various countries of which we speak are not blood ties. The most powerful link is the shared commitment to concepts of Law and Liberty, in a way that is not shared to anything like the same degree by other countries within the general democratic sphere. In fact, there is no racial implication in the claim that Anglo political culture is the most advanced and the most promising. This style of political and civic organization happens to have emerged most importantly in Britain, and to have spread most widely from that center. This historical chance, needless to say, does not mean that our form of society is exclusive in principle, or attached to any particular genetic group.

Great Britain itself has several "nationalities." No one who knows the English, Scots and Welsh could believe for a moment that they are really much the same. Even speaking solely of Britain, one should properly speak of Anglo-Celtic, rather than Anglo-Saxon, traditions. The so-called Anglo-Saxon stock in England seems to have been based on very considerable intermarriage with and absorption of the Britons—just as on the other side of the Border, the Lowlanders who constitute the majority of the Scottish population are in large part of Anglo-Saxon descent. But, more than this, the whole British expansion overseas was heavy with Scots, Welshmen and Irishmen. The cultural, temperamental and other differences are very great indeed. But the liberal political and civic tradition transcends them.

Nor, even in Britain, is the political culture totally and wholly associated with the English language. Several languages are spoken: Welsh, Gaelic, and, these days, Romani, Urdu, Bengali, Greek, Maltese. But English is very much the central tongue. We must insist that this bond of language—one that, crucially, is missing in "Europe"—is a strong one, and tends, moreover, to carry shared assumptions.

If the British population is itself fairly heterogeneous, the American is much more so. In their economic interests and their social structure, even the original United States were (and it is worth noting that the plural verb continued to be used until after the Civil War) a variegated lot. As Thomas Paine pointed out, the populace were by no means entirely of the same stock: even if the black element was then essentially excluded from the civic culture, the New York Dutch, the Germans and Swedes in the middle colonies, the important Huguenot element, let alone the Irish, were far from negligible (the Germans amounted to about a tenth of the population, the Scotch-Irish about three-quarters of a tenth).

What the colonies had in common was first a main language; but second, and more important, they had the institutions and habits of a legal and civic culture. Some American and other writers have taken the view that "national identity", in the sense in which it is found among the European peoples, is to some degree weaker in the United States, and that for this reason there is a ten-

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dency to substitute general principles, or supposed general principles, for the deeper and less conscious bonds. It may be true that some such substitution takes place, at least in certain minds. But it would be hard to assert that an American identity, starting in Revolutionary times, did not get a secure hold. The argument that the huge influx of immigrants from various nations to some degree diluted this may appear plausible on the surface. But to what degree? The astonishing thing, until very recently at least, was the effectiveness of the "melting pot." But in any case, the fact of maintaining the older national, religious and cultural traditions of the countries from which the American nation derives (or in recent years the fact of a notable return to those traditions) need not in any way affect the general national feeling. For with us the state does not aspire to be the center of all public aspiration. We can include communities of different internal loyalties. In Britain, loyalty to a Scottish clan or to the Jewish community does not in any way compete with loyalty to the country. America's ethnic diversity, in fact, may yet promote greater national pride.

It was said of Disraeli that "At but one remove by birth from Southern Europe and the East, he was an Englishman in nothing but his devotion to England, and his solicitude for her honour and prosperity", and this would apply to many originating outside our culture, but temperamentally within it. A number of the most prominent and devoted adherents of the ideas involved—statesmen, judges and others—have been immigrants. Some thirty million people of African descent have English as their native tongue and generally regard our political tradition as their own. Most are in the United States, but they include majorities or important minorities in a number of independent states, largely in the Caribbean, together with a large community in Britain. No doubt there are racial problems in most of our countries. It would be up to the Association to give even greater reason for, and scope to, such feelings of community.

What We Stand To Gain

THE UNITED STATES nowadays has less wish to undertake the enormously preponderant role in the West's foreign and military arrangements and responsibilities that has fallen to it in the second half of the twentieth century. A unity with the other countries of the same tradition would ease the American task and spread some of the responsibility. (Apart from Britain's well-recognized role as the most dependable ally of the United States, it may be worth recalling that Australia and New Zealand are the only countries that have fought alongside America in all four major wars of this century.) Countries that have relied on the Americans, and themselves been inadequately faced with either the responsibilities or the decisions of world power, should be brought into the central processes.

It is not only that the United States, still the most powerful of democracies, may no longer feel capable of bearing the burden—political as well as military—on its own. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia have the skills but they do not have the power to act autonomously with any but local effect. Yet their interests, too, are deeply involved in the world scene, and there are contributions they can make. Thus, a recent American tendency to make unilateral decisions, and then to complain that its allies are not backing it up, is relevant to the present world troubles. Under a closer Association, countries such as the United Kingdom, which have not seldom felt themselves committed by American decisions tending to the unilateral, would share not only the responsibility of decision but also that of military or other action.

It is not true—as some British left-wing circles would certainly declare—that in such an Association the United Kingdom would come more directly under American control or influence. Precisely the opposite: it would no longer find major confrontations, or lesser decisions on weaponry or local commitment,

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taken without its participation. At present it is possible for confrontations to occur in many parts of the world in which, though some sort of national consultation might take place, real decisions committing Britain would be taken unilaterally in Washington; or, alternatively, the United States would have to face a crisis alone—to the benefit, in either case, of none of us. And, in stressing the negative side, we should not forget that in the Iraq confrontations in 1998 it was Britain—and Canada and Australia—that supported the United States: which is to say that a de facto trend to united policies already exists. This should logically lead to a far greater interdependence.

From the point of view of the world at large, then, we can view a greater Association both in the short and in the long term. In the short term it would define political civilization, opening a great part of the world to joint solutions of economic and social problems. In the long term it would help to secure world peace, transforming politically backward areas and creating the conditions for a genuine world community. The Western alliance originally assembled around the power of the United States. That power no longer being so predominant, if the United States and the rest of the English-speaking world could combine their strengths, they would once again provide a strong center around which a new world community could develop.

Judged in this deeper perspective the European Union looms small: either as an irrelevance that can be adapted and encysted, or as an aberration that can be corrected. But suppose that the often stated aim of some "Europeans" to create a political and economic and even a military force roughly equal in power to the United States were feasible; as noted above it could not but be harmfully divisive of the West. By contrast, an English-speaking union, far from repelling the other democracies, would form a rallying point for democratic movements the world over. Indeed, if the EU proved to be in the interests of neither the United States nor Britain, and became a handicap to the development of a worldwide democratic culture, a different approach would clearly be required from the Europeans themselves.

The Primacy of the Political

THE PERSPECTIVE of an Association opens up eventually to a free market of the entire "Western" world. The EU on the other hand is more or less openly concerned with a narrower autarky, in essential competition with the United States. There are, it seems, several things to be learned from the experience of the EU—that is, quite apart from the creation of a Little Europe mentality. The mere mechanics of the supposed unification of Western Europe were, to begin with, wrongly conceived. First, it was believed that economic unity would precede and produce political unity. But in general the broader and higher attitudes that constitute politics must always prevail; or, to put it another way, the economy can only be a component, important but never decisive, of the political. Of course, it goes without saying that certain minimum economic matters must be adequately dealt with or a polity will collapse. But that does not make economics determinative—in a house the plumbing must work, but none of us would choose a house for its plumbing.

That said, a respectable school of economists has long preferred the transatlantic option on economic grounds alone. Douglas Jay, president of the Board of Trade in the British Labour government of 1964-67, urged instead of the European Economic Community the idea of a North Atlantic Free Trade Association. In his original conception, this would have consisted of Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and the old European Free Trade Area. As he pointed out as early as 1968, this would have saved Britain from the expensive food policy of the Common Market and would have provided a duty-free market without rises in export costs. He noted also the advantages to Canada, at the time the country with the smallest tariff-free market of any leading industrial nation.

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In America, Congress was told by President Lyndon Johnson's trade representative, William Ross, that the project was receiving serious consideration. A conference at New York University between members of the business, trade union and university worlds of Britain, Canada and the United States—including UK trade union leader Frank Cousins, the economist Roy Harrod, Senator Javits and Professor Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., as well as representatives of the Canadian Conservative and Liberal Parties—welcomed the proposal. This particular initiative did not lead to results, but it does show a potentially receptive mood to an idea close to the one I am proposing.

And there are other indications that the idea continues to attract. Today, for example, we see the New Atlantic Initiative, which is promoted by a Washington think tank, the American Enterprise Institute, and supported by a broad spectrum of statesmen and thinkers in Europe and North America. And in 1998 American receptivity to a form of transatlantic association generated the suggestion from several Washington sources that the United Kingdom should join NAFTA. True, many of these initiatives have been framed in terms of a joint Euro-American approach. But this is hardly possible until the grotesque rigors of the European Union are abated. Meanwhile, a British move into a transatlantic, or rather transoceanic, association—while Britain retains membership in a less overweening "Europe"—could prepare the way for a later coherence of the entire "West."[1]

THERE WILL, of course, be opposition to these proposals. It will come from various sources. In some Third World countries, the cry of neocolonialism or neoimperialism will go up. In Britain, those of the Left who wish to use British political insularity to turn the island into a fogbound Cuba will see our suggestions as something that will make their schemes impossible. Chauvinist Americans, on the other hand, will deplore association as a means to impede America's ability to act independently. A further obstacle is the strength of protectionist instincts in the United States. On the Left, elements who are opposed to any strengthening of the West must, of course, object. On the Right, exaggerated localism and conservatism tend to some extent in the same direction. But in reply to the latter, the actual powers devolved to an Association, at least until a further stage may be reached, will be small. No derogation of sovereignty will arise. The task will merely be coordination and cooperation.

Even so, the concept of sovereignty is in many cases not susceptible to clear-cut definition. Each of the constituent elements of the United States, for example, is still technically speaking sovereign, and the degree of that sovereignty was not settled until ninety years after the Declaration of Independence. Originally, the Union, let alone the preceding Confederation of that period, was an association undertaken for reasons both practical and ideal—that is, a good deal was left undefined, or inadequately defined, to be developed by later generations. With us, too, there would be a period of flexible negotiation with no preconceptions about stages to be reached within a given time period.

It is not my purpose to lay down the ways in which this change might come about. Clearly, a political movement in our respective countries would have to develop. One can envisage a start made by committees of politicians, and of others in public life, with assistance from the New Atlantic Initiative, which has already opened serious and urgent debate among all those concerned with the problem of Western unity. The time then would perhaps be not too far off for something like a Declaration of Interdependence, and the election of an Intercontinental Congress—with, at the start, no more than a small and flexible permanent staff and a coordination of foreign, military and trade policies. We can meanwhile

[1]See Conrad Black, "Britain's Atlantic Option—And America's Stake", *The National Interest* (Spring 1999).

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present the substance of such an arrangement—one that has breadth and scope and yet avoids the spurious breadth and scope of dogma or artificiality.

The internationalist idea, and internationalist ideas in general, may thus be channeled into the construction of a community with a genuine cultural unity. Though not world-embracing, it will be fit to act as a model and center from which the eventual progress of the entire world may proceed. For as President Kennedy said in his message to Congress on January 11, 1962, "Our basic goal remains the same: a peaceful world community of free and independent states—free to choose their own future and their own system, as long as it does not threaten the freedom of others."

In that context, what is here proposed is not a solution so much as a direction. It is one that is in accord with both our reason and our feelings. □

Herdable Groups

La France profonde has disappeared within our century; or at least is now graspable only in tainted form. Edith Wharton, in 1908, saw this about to happen. 'The demands of motoring,' she wrote, 'are introducing modern plumbing and Maple furniture into the uttermost parts of France.' Those romantic old inns, where it was 'charming to breakfast, if precarious to sleep,' were doomed; with them, that 'independence and simplicity of living,' that 'thriftily compact traditional life' formed over centuries by the landscape's inhabitants. 'The trivial motorist' (a class in which she included herself) was to prove the forerunner of other destructive agents: war, peace, communications technology, mass tourism, the unfettered free market, Americanization, Eurification, greed, short-termism, smug ahistoricism.

The old nation-states of Europe are being homogenized into herdable groups of international consumers separated only by language. (Hence the political enthusiasm for bombing Serbia: We are not just about economics! Look, we have moral values too!) Is this a fair—or, at least, the only—price to pay for the avoidance of those recidivist spasms of continent-wide warfare which marked our previous history? Perhaps. . . . But both the lowering of ambition among the European leadership and the lowering of distinctiveness among the European population have to be noted. We give character to our own particular region of dullness by certain totemic cults and, where necessary, by the invention of tradition.

—Julian Barnes, *New York Review of Books*, August 12, 1999

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China's Military: A Second Opinion

James Lilley and Carl Ford

IN THEIR recent article in the pages of *The National Interest* ("China's Hollow Military", Summer 1999), Bates Gill and Michael O'Hanlon write that "China's military is simply not very good." We think they got that half right. China is no military superpower and will not acquire that status for some years to come. But measured in terms of its capacity to challenge key U.S. allies in East Asia, China's capabilities have grown exponentially. That is the point; the authors miss it.

Gill and O'Hanlon assert that because China presently has a limited capacity to attack, say, Manhattan, it is therefore "severely limited" in its ability to act upon its "concerns and intentions." But in setting up such a straw man, it is the authors' arguments, not the capabilities of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), that are severely limited. It is China's burgeoning ability to challenge U.S. interests in East Asia, not the danger it poses to the continental United States, that threatens to draw America into a military confrontation in the years ahead. Indeed, one need only look back three years to the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1996—when thousands of U.S. military personnel stood minutes from military confrontation with communist Chinese naval forces—for a preview of what may lie in the future.

Recently, others have observed that, "Increasingly, political pressures are pushing the U.S. toward a self-fulfilling prophesy: Treat China as if it is inevitably hostile and dangerous, and it is more likely to become hostile and dangerous."[1] Gill and O'Hanlon harbor a similar fear, and it is one that we share. But we believe that understating the potential threat China poses to American interests, as the authors have done, is just as wrong as exaggerating it. Sound policy formulation starts with solid assessments, not false assumptions.

By emphasizing direct comparisons between the defense capabilities of the United States and the PRC, the authors create an artificial and misleading construct. Such comparisons distort more than they enlighten. Few imagine that the People's Republic of China (PRC), either now or in the foreseeable future, could best the United States in an all-out war. Though comforting in the abstract, that reality is not terribly relevant to the challenges at hand. What the Jiang regime gives every indication of striving for is sufficient military clout to achieve its aims in Asia. In the short term, it wishes to intimidate Taiwan sufficiently to bring about unification on Beijing's

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[1]Gerald F. Seib, "Another Threat Looms: China As New Demon", *Wall Street Journal*, May 26, 1999.

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terms. Accomplishing that entails limiting or closing off entirely Washington's ability to intervene early and with enough force to prevent Taiwan from being overwhelmed. Looking further ahead, the PRC seeks to cow its neighbors and diminish American influence in the region. For these purposes, the PLA is close to being good enough today—and even better tomorrow.

Trends Count

FIRST, it makes a big difference where you fight a war. Beijing would be no match for the United States in the Persian Gulf or off the beaches of Waikiki, but a battle fought in Sichuan province would be a very different matter. The same applies to the Taiwan Strait. Anyone who believes that such a confrontation would be a walkover for American forces misunderstands the challenges the PLA would pose to U.S. operations near China's shores, and how difficult it would be even for the United States to operate on a major scale so far from home. That Beijing does not presently seek to provoke a military confrontation with the United States, and is deterred for now from lesser military actions in the Taiwan Strait, should not delude anyone into believing that China would not be a formidable opponent on its own turf, or that the PLA is as "hollow" as the authors would have readers believe.

Further, any comparison that depends merely on counting up all our military assets or raw defense expenditures for its persuasive power is almost always wrong. Consider, to begin with, Beijing's defense budget. The government has agreed to increase military spending by almost 13 percent next year. Apologists both inside and outside China downplay that boost by claiming that it still leaves the PLA's level of expenditures far short of the Pentagon's. They also argue that most of the increase goes for improving "living standards" and is therefore not very important. Such statements make for good sound bites, but are seriously misleading. Even those who minimize China's military heft admit that defense spending overall "has grown by more than 50 percent in real terms over the course of the 1990s", as Gill and O'Hanlon state. The authors' protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, these trends are important.

Trends provide a good indication of intentions. Investments of the sort Beijing is making can mean only one thing: China is determined to improve the PLA's fighting capability. While most nations are reducing defense expenditures in the post-Cold War era, China is one of the few doing the opposite. We see the same trend in the PLA's training activities, the theoretical work being churned out by its think tanks and educational institutions, and, most important, in its build-up opposite Taiwan.[2]

Analysts of the Gill-O'Hanlon school typically claim that these increases in military spending are largely benign, going mostly to meet personnel costs. They argue in this vein knowing full well that personnel and related costs take up the bulk of military budgets in any army. What they neglect to mention is that many of the uses for which these expenditures are intended—the PLA's modernization drive and its stepped-up training activities, for example—will have considerable impact on China's military capabilities.[3] Across the board, the PLA is engaged in a major spending effort to upgrade weapons and equipment and improve its operational capabilities. According to the Pentagon, these efforts have already enhanced China's ability to project military power. One important example is China's growing stock of ballistic missiles aimed at Taiwan. The quick-strike capability these missiles provide China will only increase between now and 2005.

It is also important to recognize that China never tells the truth about its defense

[2]William S. Cohen, "The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait", Report to Congress pursuant to the FY99 Appropriations Bill (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1999).

[3]Ibid.

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spending. For years experts have considered the publicly released figures to be only the tip of the iceberg. While no one can be certain, since much of the funding is hidden, many estimate that the unclassified budget probably understates real spending by at least a third. In fact, most Western estimates put China's annual military expenditure between 28 and 50 billion U.S. dollars—that is, 4 to 7 times the official figure. Moreover, it is precisely in the areas of weapons acquisition and training—both of which the PLA finances with profits from its sale of missiles and other weapons to rogue nations such as Iraq, Iran, Libya and Syria—that the Chinese are most secretive.

Corbis/AFP

Ambassador at bay.

We can, however, observe in general terms China's broad interest in military research and acquisitions. The PLA's programs run the gamut of leading-edge military technology. From multiple missile warheads to stealth technology and the neutron bomb, the PLA is investing considerable amounts of time and money to improve its arsenal and its ability to project power. Obtaining air refueling platforms and airborne early warning aircraft remains high on the PLA's priority list, and it will likely acquire both in the near future. China has also shown considerable interest in improving its naval aviation assets and has discussed the need for aircraft carriers.[4] And despite its strident protests over U.S. theater missile defense plans, China has long been working to improve its own missile defense capabilities. As Paul Bracken points out, "Ballistic missiles break down the entire strategy of forward engagement from fixed bases. They are directed at the key vulnerability that Western powers in Asia always faced but that until recently Asian nations could not exploit."[5] Indeed, it is difficult to identify a weapons system or new technology that China's is *not* hoping to acquire.

Also absent from Gill and O'Hanlon's comparison of U.S. and PRC defense spending is any recognition of the costs and restraints associated with Washington's status as a superpower. Our global military responsibilities have always come at considerable cost. Much of our defense spending, dating back to the Cold War, goes toward maintaining nuclear deterrence for ourselves and our allies. While the end of the arms race brought reduced requirements, we still maintain a massive nuclear capability and the ability to retaliate anywhere in the world. China, by contrast, channels its defense expenditures to much narrower uses.

Apples and Oranges

GILL AND O'Hanlon suggest that China's antiquated logistics system would severely limit the PLA's ability to fight a real war, especially one outside its borders. Again the naysayers have it half right. China's logistics system is not very modern, and it cannot supply large amounts of cargo by air or support troops fighting far from home. Then again, it was not designed with such

[4]Shen Zhongchang, et al., "21st-Century Naval Warfare", in *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, ed. Michael Pillsbury (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1998), pp. 261-74.

[5]Bracken, *Fire in the East* (New York: Harper Collins, 1999), p. 48.

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purposes in mind. For that, China would need to add new capabilities on top of its existing system.

In China's far western areas, such as Xinjiang, that is, on a small scale, exactly what the PLA seems to be doing. Worried about the activities of Americans and others in the former Soviet states bordering China, and lacking an adequate road and rail network in the area, the PLA has begun improving its logistics system in the region. While these efforts are just beginning, they could serve as a model for similar operations elsewhere in China.

In any case, the appellation "old" does not always mean "bad", and for the PLA's logistics system "tried and true" offers a more apt description than "outmoded" or "ineffective." Chinese forces depend on an elaborate network of existing supply and support facilities all over China, connected primarily by road and rail. The network can sustain the PLA in combat for extended periods of time over vast geographic areas. While the PLA's logistics infrastructure is best suited for protracted defense of its homeland, it can be adapted to support modest forays outside China. For example, the well-timed 1974 seizure of the Paracel Islands from South Vietnam involved successful amphibious tactics against a weaker enemy, executed with dispatch and overwhelming force.

China's continental approach to logistics differs sharply from the American system of power projection. Comparing the two obscures more than it clarifies. For our system, as it developed during the Cold War, depends on creating sea and air links to anywhere in the world on short notice. While each new crisis poses different challenges for the United States, all, except for those of a minor nature, require forward bases to channel supplies into theaters of operation. Without forward bases, severe limits exist on the size of the force we can deploy and how long our naval air units can remain engaged. China, by contrast, is its own forward base.

Just as "old" is not always "bad", so the PLA's large size, which many point to as proof of its technological shortcomings, is not necessarily a drawback. There are times when bigger *is* better. For one thing, the PLA's size enables it to mount a defense in depth, a classical continental strategy, and the opposite of the essentially linear defense adopted by NATO during the Cold War. China's strategy substitutes successive lines of forces prepositioned in the most defensible terrain for the qualities of mobility and lethality favored by NATO. True, this puts a premium on maintaining large numbers of troops and requires a sizable land mass. But with each success, an invader—much as Napoleon or Hitler in Russia, or the Japanese in China—will find his logistics tail increasingly vulnerable. There is no reason why a continental defense strategy such as this would not prove effective for the Chinese under modern battlefield conditions. It would be at least good enough to deter the United States or some other would-be aggressor from waging a ground war on the Asian mainland. And in the absence of such a threat, it is hard to imagine subduing China with air power alone.

The Nuclear Dimension

WE LOOKED in vain for any treatment by the authors of the nuclear dimension in a confrontation with China. Yet any discussion of China's military capabilities is incomplete without it. Not since the Cuban Missile Crisis has the United States come up directly against another nuclear-armed power. Neither for that matter have any of our opponents been able to bring the fight to the U.S. mainland. While we have proved adept at bringing war to the other side almost without limit, our rear areas and support bases have gone untouched. Not so in the case of a confrontation with Beijing. Were one to commence, we would have to be mindful of the PLA's nuclear capability, regardless of how unlikely its use might be.

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Small by U.S. and Russian standards, China's mostly land-based missile force can strike the continental United States from fixed silos in western China. Both the 2nd Artillery (China's Strategic Rocket Force) and the navy field less reliable systems—at least at present. But that is about to change. Two new missiles, the DF-31 and DF-41, are modern solid fuel missiles probably with multiple warheads, and are far more mobile than previous Chinese systems.[6] Both can reach the United States. The DF-31 was successfully tested on August 2 of this year, a launch with a message for both Taiwan and the United States. The JL-II, another new missile under development, has submarine applications, and should be tested this year as well.[7] China's submarine force is still mostly a threat in East Asia, but sudden submarine attacks on Taiwan's shipping could prove devastating, as Taiwanese forces lack a modern and effective anti-submarine warfare capability. Nevertheless, the mobility inherent in each of these new systems makes them highly survivable even against our latest and best high-tech surveillance systems.

China's Ability To Take Taiwan by Force

THE AUTHORS ARE nowhere more off base than on their assessment of the military threat China poses to Taiwan. Since they wish to conclude that the PLA is a "hollow military" and that "an enormous gap separates China's military capabilities from its aspirations", they make two important assumptions: first, that the FY99 Department of Defense military balance report to Congress is seriously wrong; and second, that the United States would intervene to protect Taiwan.

Let us take a closer look at what the Department of Defense has to say in its report to Congress that Gill and O'Hanlon find so bizarre. They seem to have several passages in mind.

On China's defense strategy and force planning:

> In recent years, there has been growing evidence that China's force developments strategy is being influenced, in part, by its focus on preparing for military contingencies along its southeastern flank, especially in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea.

On a PRC blockade of Taiwan:

> Barring third party intervention, the PLAN's quantitative advantage over Taiwan's Navy in surface and sub-surface assets would probably prove overwhelming over time. Taiwan's military forces probably would not be able to keep the island's key ports and SLOCs open in the face of concerted Chinese military action. Taiwan's small surface fleet and four submarines are numerically insufficient to counter China's major surface combatant force and its ASW assets likely would have difficulty defeating a blockade supported by China's large submarine force.

On missile strikes:

> Within the next several years, the size of China's SRBM force is expected to grow substantially. An expanded arsenal of conventional SRBMs and LACMs targeted against critical facilities, such as key airfields and C4I nodes, will complicate Taiwan's ability to conduct military operations.

On PLA air superiority:

> while the majority of the mainland's air fleet will still be composed of second and third generation aircraft, the sheer numerical advantage of older platforms augmented by some fourth generation aircraft could attrit [sic] Taiwan's air defenses sufficiently over time to achieve air superiority.

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[6]Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "China Increases Its Missile Forces While Opposing U.S. Missile Defense", The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 1268, April 7, 1999.

[7]James Kynge and Stephen Fidler, "China's Submarine-Launched Missile To Be Tested", *Financial Times*, June 3, 1999.

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On conducting an amphibious invasion:

> The PLA likely would encounter great difficulty conducting such a sophisticated campaign by 2005. Nevertheless, the campaign likely would succeed—barring third party intervention—if Beijing were willing to accept the almost certain political, economic, diplomatic, and military costs that such a course of action would produce.

None of the Pentagon's findings strike us as being out of line. All, except for the implications of the recent missile deployments near Taiwan, have been known and widely accepted by intelligence analysts for many years. Indeed, while Gill and O'Hanlon disagree with the Pentagon's most important conclusions, they cite approvingly those portions of the report that have negative things to say about the PLA.

As the report suggests, Taiwan would face an enormous challenge in defending itself against a determined PRC attack. The island is too close to the mainland and the mismatch in force levels too great for Taipei to hold out indefinitely. Although Taiwan's technological advantages, higher levels of training and adequate preparations would prolong the struggle, defeating China is simply too tall an order for Taipei so long as the mainland is prepared to suffer huge casualties and bear the condemnation of the international community. Obviously, costly mistakes by either side or just sheer luck could change the equation, but in terms of raw capability China emerges triumphant under nearly all plausible scenarios.

The name of the game for Taiwan, then, is deterrence. Taipei's best chance for survival lies in convincing Beijing that the costs of an invasion are prohibitive, and that the island can hold out long enough for the international community, and especially the United States, to come to its rescue. In the first instance, this means maintaining a qualitative edge over the PRC. Here perception is almost as important as reality. Without ready access to high-technology weapons systems, which come almost exclusively from the United States, Taiwan cannot sustain the confidence of its troops or its population. On the other hand, any slippage in quality might persuade Beijing that the military balance had shifted in its favor, or that international support for Taiwan is eroding. In either case, Beijing would be emboldened.

Unless Taipei can prolong the conflict beyond a few weeks, the likelihood that the United States, or anyone else, will intervene declines sharply. Give the United States enough time and it can go anywhere and fight anyone with a high probability of success. Rob us of that opportunity, however, and we will be put at a disadvantage, especially if the scene of the combat is far away and our access to bases is limited. Take the case of North Korea. By any measure that nation is no match for either the United States or South Korea. But U.S. and South Korean military officials alike worry mightily about what could happen between the Demilitarized Zone and Seoul during the first few days of any war, or the consequences such a conflict might have if it should commence when the United States is tied down somewhere else. Thus, the North Koreans, with possibly one or two nuclear weapons against America's estimated six thousand, have been able to blackmail the United States for billions of dollars of aid.

Taiwan, like South Korea, must maintain forces sufficient to convince planners in Beijing that they cannot achieve their military objectives quickly. The PRC's new missile deployments opposite Taiwan make this task increasingly difficult. China's General Staff seems to have recognized that its threats of a blockade, an air war or an amphibious assault have become less and less credible, because such time-consuming operations would provide outsiders an opportunity to weigh in on Taiwan's side. The missile threat bears directly on this question, as any rocket attack would come as a rapid *blitzkrieg*-like bombardment.

Which is exactly why missile defense figures so prominently in Taiwan's current thinking. Now that the PLA has placed a

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greater emphasis on conventional ballistic and cruise missiles in its deployments opposite Taiwan, Taipei is reconsidering its need for THAAD and AEGIS missile defense systems. Both will likely receive a higher priority in future arms sales discussions between Taiwan and the United States, and for good reason.

CHINA, and those in the United States who take its side in its dispute with Taiwan, would argue, of course, that there is a much easier and safer alternative to Taiwan's growing insecurity—concede China's claim of sovereignty over the island. Since Taiwan is a democracy and an overwhelming number of its citizens reject that option, this would only happen if Taiwan's population is sufficiently intimidated or otherwise coerced into doing so. Obviously, the American response to China's strong-arm tactics is crucial. Any lack of resolve on our part sends dangerous signals to both Taiwan and the mainland. Fortunately, President Clinton's deployment of aircraft carriers in response to the 1996 missile firing incident does not appear to have been an aberration, but rather evidence of a new American consensus in support of Taiwan having a say in its future.

This does not mean that Americans want to go to war with China, and we think the authors too quickly count the United States into the military equation. Under any circumstances, becoming caught in a conflict with the PRC is the last thing we want to do. Granted, the introduction of U.S. forces changes the equation dramatically and would prove an almost insurmountable obstacle for the PLA. Much, however, depends on the amount of time it takes us to react and on what forces we commit to the conflict. Then, too, there is the nuclear dimension to think about. In fact, Taiwan depending on the United States so heavily for its defense seems to be the most risky option for everyone.

Better that the island, as envisaged in the Taiwan Relations Act, maintain "a sufficient self-defense capability", and reserve for the United States an important, but secondary, role in its defense. Such a course is the most stable and the least susceptible to miscalculation on Beijing's part. Let the PLA General Staff make its calculations of peace or war based primarily on what it confronts immediately across the Taiwan Strait, rather than considerations of what might be available by way of the United States.

This approach has the virtue of putting the PRC at the center of decision-making concerning Taiwan's defense preparations, but in the right way. The consistent message America would be sending to China is: "It is up to you. Strong-arm tactics will not work. Military build-ups and other provocative actions, contrary to promoting your interests, will only accelerate and intensify Taiwan's defense effort, its arms purchases from the United States, and sympathy for its cause." □

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The Travail of the Gypsies

Guenter Lewy

A RECENT U.S. State Department report on human rights around the world noted that Gypsies, often also called Romani or Roma,[1] "suffer disproportionately from poverty, unemployment, interethnic violence, discrimination, illiteracy and disease." In Hungary, Gypsies number between half and one million, and they are routinely subjected to harassment and intimidation by skinheads and other extremist elements; many have been attacked physically. Romania has about 2.5 million Gypsies, and there, too, anti-Gypsy violence is rampant. According to a recent poll in the Czech Republic, almost one-third of its population is opposed to coexistence with the Gypsy minority, who number between two and three hundred thousand and constitute an impoverished underclass. Assaults on Gypsies by Serbian neo-Nazi gangs are frequent; in October 1997 a pregnant Gypsy woman was beaten to death in Belgrade. The Gypsies of Kosovo have been accused of collaborating with the Serbs during the recent ethnic cleansing of the province, and those who have not fled to Serbia have been severely harassed. A 1994 survey done for the American Jewish Committee in Germany found that 68 percent of those questioned did not want Gypsies as neighbors and 40 percent judged the behavior of Gypsies to be "provocative." In September 1994 two Gypsy refugees from the former Yugoslavia died in an arson attack in a small town in Westphalia, Germany. In February 1995 four Gypsies in Austria were killed by a pipe bomb. All this comes after a wave of Nazi persecution during the Second World War that claimed the lives of more than a hundred thousand Gypsies.

Why do Gypsies incur so much hostility? Who are these elusive people who have their own language, but no written or oral history? Estimates of the number of Gypsies in the United States alone range between one hundred thousand and one million, but why do they not appear in any census?

The people known as Gypsies speak a multiplicity of dialects derived from Sanskrit, with borrowings from Persian, Kurdish and Greek. Analysis of this language, known as Romani, and other evidence has established with considerable certainty that the Gypsies left the Indian subcontinent more than a thousand years ago, probably in several waves, and gradually migrated through Persia,

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[1] Some authors who consider the word Gypsy pejorative have started using the term Roma (or Sinti and Roma for the Gypsies of Germany). Others, including several Gypsy writers, have insisted on the uninterrupted use of Gypsy in order to maintain historical continuity and express solidarity with those who were persecuted under this name.

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Armenia and Turkey to Europe. We do not know what brought about this exodus. For the fourteenth century, their presence is documented in Greece, where they were known as *Atzinganoi*; the German *Zigeuner*, the French *Tsiganes*, the Italian *Zingari* and similar names in other languages derive from this Byzantine appellation. From the year 1417 on, chronicles mention their movement through Germany. That same year, the German Emperor Sigismund issued a group of some one hundred Gypsies a letter of safe conduct.

Presenting themselves as pilgrims and penitents, Gypsies at first were well received in Europe and were the recipients of both private and public alms. The story they told of their origins, sometimes referred to as "The Great Trick", is handed down in several versions. According to some accounts, they claimed to hail from Egypt and were doing penance for having abandoned Christianity. Others relate that they claimed to be expiating the sins of their forefathers who had refused to help the Blessed Virgin and the Christ child on their flight to Egypt. The Gypsies were therefore frequently called "Egyptians"; the names "Gypsies" in English and "Gitanos" in Spanish are distorted forms of this word. Very soon, however, tensions developed between indigenous, sedentary populations and these foreign-looking nomads, who made their living by repairing kettles, sharpening scissors, trading horses, performing music and dances, and telling fortunes. Their dedication to a life of penance was frequently called into question, and Gypsies were often denounced as heathens. Many accounts mention that they were excessively given to thievery. There were charges of sorcery, witchcraft, child stealing and spying for the infidel Turks. Gypsies were said to be noisy, dirty, immoral and deceitful. Their self-proclaimed ability to see into the future both attracted and terrified.

The theme of the stealing and dishonest Gypsies appears regularly in medieval chronicles. Jealous craft guilds, seeking to maintain local monopolies, sought to limit traditional Gypsy occupations such as metalworking and the manufacture of baskets. As a result of these restrictions, Gypsies increasingly resorted to begging and stealing, reinforcing a stereotype that had accompanied them from the time of their arrival in Europe. With the spread of the Reformation, pilgrims lost their earlier lofty status, and begging, too, came under sharp attack. While local parishes were prepared to support their indigenous poor, foreign beggars were routinely sent away.

After the Thirty Years War of the seventeenth century, which uprooted thousands, vagrant hordes of dispossessed peasants and disbanded soldiers strode through the land, stealing for their sustenance. Some Gypsies, too, formed robber bands. In response, local rulers enacted a flood of punitive legislation, some of it specifically directed against Gypsies. About three-quarters of the more than one hundred anti-Gypsy measures enacted in German lands were issued within one hundred years of the Thirty Years War. Sometimes Gypsies were declared to be outlaws by definition, who, if found, could be put to death without trial. In other places they were to be flogged, branded and expelled. Only gradually did the forces of enlightenment sweeping through Europe in the eighteenth century temper the cruelty of the law and bring about an amelioration in the status of the Gypsies. Their musical talent often was an important factor in winning a measure of tolerance.

Under the Empress Maria Theresa (1740-80) and her son, Joseph II (1780-90), Gypsies in Hungary and Austria were forced to settle. The result was that they lived a precarious existence on the fringes of villages; the more fortunate found work in construction and as farm hands. In Romania, Gypsies were held as serfs and slaves, and their full emancipation did not come until 1864. As European society was becoming more urbanized and industrialized, Gypsies had to abandon some of their old trades and many became impoverished. Still, they resisted as best they could becoming wage laborers. Industrial production rendered the making of

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articles for hawking an endangered trade; instead, many peddled machine-made goods from wholesalers. Moving from village to town, they were sedentary during the winter months, but following seasonal occupations they continued their independent and nomadic way of life during the summer. This lifestyle raised in their hosts a mixture of fascination, fear, distrust and rejection.

THERE CAN BE little doubt that much of the enmity and outright persecution experienced by the Gypsies throughout their history has been due to prejudice and xenophobia. The Gypsies were different and that fact alone caused them problems. Their nomadic way of life was often romanticized; they were said to lead a carefree existence, noble in spirit and close to nature. At the same time, the Gypsies also drew the suspicion and hostility of their hosts. As in the case of the Jews, they were accused of every conceivable misdeed and crime, and this stereotyped view of Gypsy life is reflected in our language. In English, to "gyp" is to swindle or cheat, a gypsy moth is a parasite whose larvae feed on the foliage of trees, and a gypsy cab driver is someone who picks up passengers without a proper taxi license.

Yet prejudice alone is not a sufficient explanation for the hostility that Gypsies have suffered over the centuries. Whether the result of exclusion, poverty or other factors, the fact is that certain characteristics of Gypsy life tend to reinforce or even create hostility amongst the populations they encounter. These traits, customs and attitudes are reported not only by their enemies but also by well-meaning observers, sympathetic anthropologists and, at times, by Gypsies themselves. Such reports appear in the earliest accounts of their appearance in Europe, and they can be found in the most recent works dealing with their way of life.

As a result of a long history of persecution, Gypsies harbor a deep-seated suspicion of non-Gypsies, referred to as the *gadzé* (or *gaje*). Through centuries of experience in avoiding the prying questions of curious outsiders, notes the American anthropologist Anne Sutherland (who professes her "admiration and respect for the Rom people"), Gypsies "have perfected the technique of evasion to an effortless art. They delight in deceiving the *gajo*, mostly for a good reason, but sometimes just for the fun of it or to keep in practice." The Belgian Jan Yoors, who lived with Gypsies for many years, relates that they practiced the art of the falsehood without self-consciousness. Gypsies, wrote another self-described friend, Martin Block of Germany, are "masters in the art of lying and pretending innocence, when there is a question of misleading a 'gadzo' or non-Gypsy. The police know this at their cost." Among other things this means that in addition to their Romani name, Gypsies very often have several non-Gypsy names. In Germany these names were usually created when a Gypsy eloped to marry, when he was stopped by the police, when he escaped custody, or deserted from the army. In the United States, too, to this day many Gypsies are known to have numerous birth certificates, driver's licenses and social security cards, each with a different name.

The Gypsies' easy resort to, and highly developed skill in, stealing has been another source of strong enmity. "Stealing from other Rom is wrong", observed Sutherland, "but it is not necessarily wrong when it is from the *gaje*; although one should not be too greedy." His friend Putzina explained to Yoors that "stealing from the Gaje was not really a misdeed as long as it was limited to the taking of basic necessities, and not in larger quantities than were needed at that moment. It was the intrusion of a sense of greed, in itself, that made stealing wrong." Hence, picking up some wood from the forest was no misdeed, for if not gathered it would rot; putting a few horses to pasture overnight in someone's meadow was not that bad, for grass would continue to grow.

Gypsies consider the world of nature as a kind of public domain, and this includes the "stray" chicken encountered on the village path. An English Gypsy, Manfri Wood,

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recalls how as a youngster before World War II he regularly poached with grown-ups:

> We all believed that three things belonged naturally to all men: the wood that lies on the ground, the birds and beasts that live in the forest and on the heath and the fish in the water. They were all free for the taking and no man had any right to deny another the privilege of the taking.

Wood owned a dog trained to catch chickens. "Wherever we traveled and whatever part of the country we were in, we always had chicken for dinner as long as that bitch was alive." According to a Gypsy legend, told in many different versions, before the crucifixion of Jesus a Gypsy stole the fourth nail intended for Jesus' heart. In gratitude, God gave the Gypsies a heavenly license to steal from the *gadzé*. Regardless of whether this story is considered an authentic Gypsy narrative or an invention of their enemies, the legend reflects accurately a widespread attitude among Gypsies toward the non-Gypsy world.

Another way of extracting money from non-Gypsies was fortune-telling, driving out spirits from sick cattle, or praying for the health of a sick person. The simple-minded mentality of the rural population, in particular, enabled Gypsies to obtain large sums of money with the help of the most basic and crude tricks. Some routines appear to be timeless and not bound by geographical boundaries. Both Jan Yoors, writing about Gypsies in France during the 1930s and 1940s, and Isabel Fonseca, who during the late 1980s spent time with Gypsies in the Balkans, describe the "scratching scheme": Several Gypsy girls, badly dressed and unkempt, would enter a butcher shop while scratching their scalp and arms as if for lice. Continuing this demonstrative scratching with vigor, they would then touch meat, hams or sausages with their dirty little hands. Sometimes they would be chased away, but more often they would be given the soiled articles at a very low price or for nothing. Once out of the store, the scratching stopped abruptly, but by then it was too late for the merchant to retrieve his goods.

Gypsies observe numerous taboos that guard against contamination by what is considered *marime* or unclean. Dishes are not washed in the same vessel used for washing clothes; there are strict rules about washing various parts of the body. Many of these rules are more concerned with maintaining ritual purity than with actual cleanliness. Polluting dirt can be visible, but it must be a clear distance from the clean. Thus the sight of feces outside a home is acceptable while indoor toilets, close to food, are shunned; the chemical toilets in modern caravans often remain unused for the same reason. Fonseca tells of a rich Gypsy in the newly independent Republic of Moldova who had built himself a palace. There were nine turrets, three grand salons and balconies over an inner court, but there were no bathrooms or toilets. Not surprisingly, non-Gypsies who do not know why Gypsies prefer a hedge to a communal lavatory or flush toilet interpret this conduct as filthy and a violation of all sanitary principles.

The same goes for other aspects of housekeeping. Gypsies take excellent care of the inside of their wagons or caravans, which often show dazzling displays of china, mirrors, carpets and elaborate formica ceilings. The outside, on the other hand, is generally indescribably dirty. Rubbish is tossed out the windows or is simply swept out the back door. Likewise, the backyards of houses inhabited by Gypsies frequently overflow with litter and junk. Gypsies are of course aware of the sanitary norms of the societies in which they live, but simply do not share them. Neighbors and health authorities naturally take a dim view of such practices, which confirm the prevalent stereotype of Gypsies.

These, then, are some examples where stereotypes and reality are not far apart. On the other hand, many of the accusations leveled at the Gypsies are the products of myth and simple prejudice. Gypsies are not promiscuous; indeed, their sexual mores are quite strict. They do not steal children, a charge that

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probably arises from the fact that the generally dark-looking Gypsies sometimes have a light-skinned and blond offspring. There is an occasional killing as a result of a tribal feud or blood revenge, but Gypsies generally do not commit murder. Though highly skilled at stealing, few commit burglary. Open houses might be victimized, but Gypsies have a superstitious fear of closed doors and windows as well as of evil spirits that wander about at night. Hence most thefts are carried out at daytime and without the use of burglary tools or force.

Moreover, many of the negative traits and social practices described above have not held true for that part of the Gypsy population that has become sedentary and occasionally prosperous. In Germany, some Gypsies assimilated, practiced ordinary crafts or trades, and not a few intermarried or lived with German partners. Still, the fact remains that during a time when large numbers of Gypsies still followed a semi-nomadic way of life, many aspects of their social organization and lifestyle clashed with the values of their hosts. By and large, therefore, Gypsies constituted a highly unpopular, not to say despised, minority, and when the Nazis stepped up the harassment and persecution practiced by earlier regimes, most of their neighbors remained superbly indifferent.

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A Gypsy camp outside Berlin, 1936

THE ASSUMPTION of power by the Nazis in Germany in 1933 had far-reaching consequences for Europe's Gypsies. To the Nazi leadership and Hitler's government, Germany's small Gypsy population of about 26,000 was at first of no particular interest. It was in large measure as a result of pressure from local and state officials as well as party rank and file that the regime began to address the "Gypsy problem." Beginning in 1937 Gypsies were targeted as part of the Nazi program of crime prevention. This led to the arrest of Gypsies without a regular occupation, their being labeled asocial, and their incarceration in concentration camps such as Buchenwald and Dachau. From 1938 on, the fight against what was termed the "Gypsy plague" made explicit use of racial criteria. Gypsies were referred to as persons "of alien blood" and subjected to the racial provisions of the Nuremberg Laws. This meant the denial of citizenship and restrictions on marrying "Aryan" Germans. Unlike in the case of the Jews, however, Hitler himself played

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practically no role in the course of persecution, which unfolded in a disorderly manner and without a clear intent or plan.

The onset of the war brought a tightening of the net. Gypsies were no longer allowed to itinerate or leave their place of residence without special permission. They were subjected to compulsory labor, dismissed from the armed forces, and generally treated as social outcasts. A program to "resettle" all the Gypsies in the newly acquired territories in the east had to be abandoned because of the logistic logjam created by the resettlement of large numbers of ethnic Germans. Still, in May of 1940, 2,500 Gypsies were sent to the General Government, the occupied part of Poland, and 5,000 Gypsies from the *Ostmark*, the former Austria, who were considered particularly "asocial", were deported to Lodz in November 1941. An indeterminable number of those "resettled" in the General Government died due to harsh living conditions. All of the deportees from the *Ostmark* perished in a typhus epidemic or were murdered in gas vans to prevent the infection of their German guards.

Following the invasion of the Soviet Union, Gypsies there were targeted as a blanket category—like Jews and communist functionaries—for destruction. Yet since the main reason for killing the Soviet Gypsies was their alleged tendency to spy, in practice most of the victims were itinerant Gypsies. Sedentary and "socially adjusted" Gypsies in many instances were able to survive the Nazi occupation. In German-occupied Serbia, local military commanders included male Gypsies among the thousands of Jews shot in reprisals for the uprising organized by the partisan movement. Large numbers of Gypsies were also killed by the Ustasha regime in Croatia.

Despite the fact that the Gypsies hailed from India and their language related to Sanskrit, Nazi "race experts" refused to recognize the Gypsies as Aryan. However, the renowned scholar of Indo-Germanic languages at the University of Munich, Walther Wüst, argued that Gypsy fairy tales were told in an idiom that was "Indoaryan" and thus manifested "unadulterated Aryan thinking." For Himmler, who had an insatiable curiosity about everything Aryan, this finding became the source of his belief that pure Gypsies were descendants of the primordial Indo-Germanic people or at least closely related to them. Hence, in October 1942 he gave orders that "racially pure" Gypsies were to be allowed to live according to their customs and mores. Gypsies of mixed parentage (*Zigeunermischlinge*), whom the "racially pure" Gypsies considered good and upright, could be accepted into the "racially pure" clans and be assigned the same status as "racially pure" Gypsies.

When, in December 1942, Himmler ordered the deportation of the allegedly asocial *Zigeunermischlinge* to a special Gypsy family camp in Auschwitz, "racially pure" Gypsies were exempted. Martin Bormann, the head of the party chancellery who also carried the title "Secretary to the Fuehrer", objected on the grounds that this special treatment represented "a fundamental departure from presently applied measures for fighting the Gypsy plague", but his objection was overruled. A memo prepared in the Ministry of Justice on February 27, 1943 noted, "New research has shown that among the Gypsies are racially valuable elements." Hence, as a result of Himmler's fascination with the Aryan race, several thousand "racially pure" Gypsies were allowed to stay in Germany and survived the Nazi regime.

THE END of the war found the Gypsy communities of Europe in a seriously weakened condition. Tens of thousands had died in German concentration camps or been killed by Quisling regimes. The large concentration of Gypsies in Eastern Europe was now under communist rule, and this meant severe restrictions on nomadism and a demand for integration. All citizens were expected to hold a steady job; entrepreneurial activities were declared illegal. A few Gypsies benefited from improved opportuni-

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ties for education, but the large majority encountered a further deterioration of their lot. Host populations were unsympathetic to the officially decreed policy of assimilation, and Gypsies ended up in ghettos and shanty towns. Their high birth rate created antagonism, and in Czechoslovakia thousands of Gypsy women were pressed to be sterilized. Romania's Ceausescu did his best to destroy Gypsy culture; Gypsy children in Bulgaria were forced into special schools in which the speaking of Romani was forbidden.

Since the downfall of communism their situation has often worsened. In the more open societies of Eastern Europe, people feel freer to express previously hidden animosities and deeply ingrained prejudices toward Gypsies. Those living in prosperous towns resent the presence of Gypsy shanty dwellers in the surrounding outskirts. Unemployment among the Gypsies of Hungary is more than 60 percent; during the economic reorganization of 1989-90, they were the first to be fired from their jobs. Most of the approximately 700,000 Gypsies in Serbia are poor, barely literate and work in menial jobs. The large majority of about 35,000 who lived in Kosovo before the NATO air campaign have fled the province, fearing retaliation for real or imagined crimes against Albanians. The future of both groups of Gypsies—those who fled as well as those who decided to stay in Kosovo—is bound to be bleak.

The situation of Gypsies in the Czech Republic is also precarious. A new citizenship law enacted in 1993 has had the effect of denaturalizing an estimated 20,000 Gypsies, about a tenth of the country's Gypsy population. Those without citizenship are barred from voting or holding public office and are routinely denied social benefits. These restrictions further penalize a largely impoverished group, often living in ramshackle ghettos. Under prodding from President Václav Havel, the Czech government in October 1997 adopted a plan for improving the social and economic situation of the Gypsies, and a change in the citizenship law has been announced. However, the results of these measures are uncertain because of the hostile environment in which Gypsies find themselves. The European Center for the Rights of Gypsies based in Budapest has reported 1,250 attacks against Gypsies in the Czech Republic since 1990—10 of which resulted in deaths. Several thousand Czech Gypsies have left for England and Canada where they have asked for asylum.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Europe now has 8 million Gypsies, but as a result of their history many of them are reluctant to acknowledge their ethnic identity, and such statistics are notoriously unreliable. For the same reason we do not know how many Gypsies live in the United States, though some authors estimate that they number up to one million. American Gypsies no longer wear golden earrings or head scarves, and because of their dark complexion they are often mistaken for Hispanics. The earliest arrived here as deportees from Europe, and between 1801-03 Napoleon exiled whole shiploads of Gypsies to Louisiana. About 50 percent are thought to have come from Eastern Europe since the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Today American Gypsies are a hidden minority, though police departments in cities with substantial Gypsy populations are aware of their presence. Many of these cities have special squads assigned to handle Gypsy crime gangs. The activities of these gangs include phony home repair schemes, welfare and insurance fraud, and sweetheart scams. The elderly in particular tend to be the victims of various time-honored confidence tricks. In 1990 a mother-daughter team of Gypsy fortune-tellers in Hartford, Connecticut was convicted of swindling seven victims out of more than $270,000, usually by purporting to rid their gullible clients of various curses. A seven-month effort of the New York City police department's special frauds squad in 1998-99 against illegal fortune-telling led to thirteen arrests. Not a few of New York's

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Gypsy fortune-tellers work out of their own apartments in expensive neighborhoods, drive luxury cars, and make an average of about $200,000 a year. Many police officers claim never to have encountered a Gypsy who held a legitimate job. This does not mean that there are no honest persons among the Gypsy population. It does mean that most of the Gypsies in America who follow regular occupations and live a perfectly normal, law-abiding existence hide their ethnic identity because of the reputation acquired by their dishonest congeners.

IN APRIL 1971 the first World Romani Congress convened in London, and since then most European countries have seen the emergence of Gypsy organizations lobbying for better treatment and equal rights. One of the most vocal and influential of these is the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma (*Zentralrat deutscher Sinti und Roma*) in Heidelberg, which acts as an umbrella for a series of local and state-wide organizations and receives financial support from the Federal Ministry for Youth, Women and the Family. The group has been successful in having memorials for Gypsies erected on the sites of several concentration camps, including Buchenwald and Ravensbrück. It has also sponsored publications aimed at educating both Gypsies and non-Gypsies about the history and culture of the people.

Regrettably, the *Zentralrat* has promoted a simplified and often false picture of the fate of the Gypsies under the Nazis, and the organization has displayed a highly hostile attitude toward any person or account likely to call into question the officially sanctioned version of events. For example, in 1984 Joachim S. Hohmann, the author of several studies written with great sympathy for the Gypsy people, published a volume of Gypsy stories collected by Engelbert Wittich (1878-1937). The work was published by the well-known Fischer publishing house, but the *Zentralrat* was apparently displeased by the accounts of Gypsy daily life portrayed in these stories and launched a vigorous campaign of protest. Wittich was accused of having been a Nazi informer—an entirely baseless charge—and the publisher was threatened with the occupation of its premises and a suit for damages unless the book was withdrawn. This campaign of intimidation was successful. The publisher recalled the six thousand printed copies from the bookstores and had them destroyed. In an account on this affair published two years later, Hohmann expressed the fear that, henceforth, publications in this field could become "subject to the self-appointed control exercised by a small circle of Gypsy representatives."

Fortunately for the cause of disinterested scholarship, Hohmann's concern proved to be excessively pessimistic, as illustrated by another more recent attempt by the *Zentralrat* to enforce its version of political correctness. The international committee of survivors of the Buchenwald concentration camp had planned a conference on the camp's history for early October 1996, and had invited to this conference Dr. Michael Zimmermann, a historian and author of the first comprehensive scholarly work on the persecution of the Gypsies by the Nazis. Romani Rose, the chairman of the *Zentralrat*, thereupon protested the invitation to the minister for science, research and culture of the state of Thüringen and asked for its cancellation. Zimmermann, he charged, denied the program of genocide planned against the Gypsies and defamed the survivors by using and accepting as reality Nazi categories such as "asocials" and "preventive crime fighting." These allegations were put forth without any substantiating evidence and indeed were completely unfounded. To his credit, the minister rejected the request of the *Zentralrat* as an interference in the freedom of teaching and research, as did the directors of the Buchenwald memorial, co-sponsors of the conference. "History in a democratic society", they declared, "is not the property of individual persons or organized interest groups. . . . The victims of National Socialism deserve our special respect.

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[However], the associations of victims do not have a special right to determine what is historically true or false." The conference took place as planned; the *Zentralrat* declined to participate.

THE FUTURE of the Gypsies remains uncertain. They continue to live as a beleaguered minority in many countries, but show no interest in returning to their place of origin, India, or even an awareness of being a national group with a distinct identity. The various Gypsy tribes have different religions and ways of life and often do not share much in common. In Germany tensions have emerged between the Sinti (Gypsies who have been in the country since the fifteenth century) and the Roma (who arrived from the Balkans during the second half of the nineteenth century). Similar to the attitude of German Jews toward the *Ostjuden* (Jews from the East) during the pre-Nazi years, the Sinti favor helping the persecuted Gypsies in southeastern Europe wherever they find themselves, while Roma organizations champion a more liberal asylum policy for their brethren refugees. It is likely that as long as Gypsies are discriminated against and harassed by their hosts, they will continue to stick together and resist assimilation. That seems to be the outlook for the foreseeable years ahead. □

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Staying Cool About Global Warming

Henry S. Rowen and John P. Weyant

LAST NOVEMBER, delegates from almost all of the world's countries met in Buenos Aires to answer a question posed six years earlier in Rio de Janeiro: How to control the emissions of greenhouse gases? At their meeting in Kyoto in December 1997, representatives of the developed countries (plus those from several countries in transition from socialist economies) had agreed to a program for reducing these emissions, the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. After Kyoto, however, their governments did virtually nothing to carry out these commitments, and it is fair to say that nothing of consequence took place in Buenos Aires either. The delegates there agreed only to a "plan of action" designed to resolve some uncertainties about how the Protocol could—or even whether it should—be implemented late in the year 2000. Given the closeness of the target date, the high cost of meeting it, and hostile politics in the United States and elsewhere, it is now clear that the Kyoto Protocol will not be carried out as planned.

The concern is the growing concentration of so-called "greenhouse gases"—and particularly carbon dioxide—in the earth's atmosphere.[1] The carbon dioxide concentration, which was 280 parts per million in the pre-industrial era, is now 360 per million and is currently on a path to reach between 600 and 700 by the end of the next century. Experts fear this rise will produce a large, damaging and possibly catastrophic increase in the atmosphere's temperature. In 1995 an eminent group of atmospheric scientists asserted that such a greenhouse-induced effect had probably been detected.

Although this topic is subject to many scientific disputes, given what is at risk politicians should not wait passively for them all to be settled. Doing nothing (except for some token projects) is making a choice, and quite possibly the wrong one. While the extent of the problem is unlikely to be determined conclusively for many years, our interpretation of the evidence leads us to the conclusion that the United States should buy some insurance against a climate catastrophe (even while the form and extent of that catastrophe remain subject to legitimate debate). For what is not in dispute is that this is a quintessentially global phenomenon. No matter where the carbon dioxide is emitted or absorbed, the world's atmosphere is indisputably being altered to a serious extent.

Among the many issues that must be addressed are the costs and benefits of climate changes, what actions should be taken to mitigate them, and how the available remedial policies might properly vary among countries and over time. Location matters, because some places are more vulnerable to possible

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[1] In addition to carbon dioxide, the targeted greenhouse gases are methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride.

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damage (low-lying islands, cities like New Orleans and whole countries like Bangladesh), while others, like Canada and Russia, might actually benefit from climate changes. Time matters because of the long (but uncertain) lags for various effects to be expressed.

Although the industrial countries presently account for about two-thirds of the world's carbon emissions, their emissions are growing much more slowly than those of the developing countries, and by about 2015 emissions from the two groups will be nearly equal. While the United States is the world's largest source today, with about 23 percent of total emissions, China, which now accounts for roughly 14 percent, will likely be the single largest emitter by around 2020.

These observations typically lead to exchanges of the following character: A spokesperson for China says, "You Americans have put more of these gases into the atmosphere than anyone else and continue to do so. And, besides, you are the richest nation. You have a responsibility to reduce your emissions." An American replies, "But China's emissions are growing faster than anyone else's and you will soon be the world's largest source. If you don't hold down your emissions you will be free-loading on the efforts of others."

There are endless repetitions of such exchanges and not only between Chinese and Americans. The U.S. Senate weighed in on the dispute in July 1997 by voting 95 to 0 against a commitment that did not include "meaningful participation by the developing countries." These countries have refused to make such a commitment, however, though fissures within the group are now emerging (for example, in Buenos Aires the representatives of Argentina and Kazakhstan pledged to adopt emission limits by the next meeting).

What is needed to meet the Kyoto objectives? At that summit, almost all of the developed nations (known as Annex B countries) agreed to limit their collective emissions to roughly 5 percent below 1990 levels by about the year 2010. The size of this task becomes evident when one considers that the Annex B countries are currently on trajectories to emit 20-35 percent *more* greenhouse gases by that year. Hence, the advanced countries must cut their emissions to 25-40 percent below the levels anticipated for a date that is only a little more than ten years distant. At the same time, emissions by the developing countries, which have made no commitments to reduction, are slated to grow by about 125 percent during the same period. For the Annex B countries, the cost of meeting the commitment made at Kyoto will not be low; most emissions come from burning coal to make electricity and from various uses of oil, two sectors at the heart of most nations' energy economies. The smaller than expected increase in carbon emissions from the United States and China in 1998 has led some people to argue that future ones will be much lower than has been estimated. Our understanding is that the U.S. slowdown was caused by mild weather and incomplete reporting, while the Chinese one was caused by an increase in coal prices. None of these effects is likely to have a large impact on emissions over the coming decades.

Another open question is how long it will take for a viable program to be adopted. For its part, the Clinton administration has proposed no legislation for meeting its commitment and will not do so before the 2000 election. That will leave about a decade to pass legislation, set up a domestic control or tax system, create an international institution for the trading of rights to emit carbon (currently required by the U.S. position), and for firms and consumers to adapt to huge cuts in coal and oil production and consumption. Other nations are hardly further ahead of us. To repeat: the probability of the Kyoto schedule being met is vanishingly small.

What Is To Be Done?

THE KYOTO Protocol route, which entails making large cuts in emissions without knowing what the bill will come to, is unlikely to be traveled very far. It would be better to rotate the strategy by 180

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degrees to one in which the costs are known and we settle for accepting whatever reductions in emissions result from a given level of spending. But before adopting such a view it should be recognized that it is not a cop-out; over the long run serious constraints on emissions will almost certainly be needed.

First, we need to be flexible with respect to the timing of proposed remedies. For it is the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere many decades hence that concerns us most; it matters little how much enters in any given year. We also must be flexible when deciding which types of gases we wish to devote more attention and resources to controlling and which merit less concern. And, finally, we should be flexible in deciding where to make cuts. Flexibility in this domain can best be achieved by trading "emission rights" (that is, licenses permitting the holder to emit a certain amount of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases). The Kyoto Protocol, however, only allows for trading emission rights among the Annex B countries (and the European delegates lobbied to limit even that). Yet, potentially large savings could come in developing countries whose energy uses (largely carbon-fueled) are growing rapidly and who can include technology in new plants at comparatively low costs.

The administration has not told the public the estimated cost of cutting our projected use of carbon in 2010 by 550 million tons per year, perhaps because that commitment implies consuming 40 percent less coal and oil. Instead it prefers to address the much lower cost prospect of paying developing countries to make these cuts. But because these countries have rejected such a course, we need to confront the question of how to meet our goals on our own.

A further question pertains to the best method of control. If we were to institute a top-down command and control structure, of the type usually favored by politicians, a bureaucracy would need to be created and rules devised, all of which would be accompanied by enormous controversy and predictable waste. (Recall price controls in the 1970s and the lines of cars at gas stations.) On the other hand, if we choose the more efficient market route, implying taxes on fuels or tradable permits, other issues arise. For instance, taxes high enough to produce large cuts in carbon emissions would generate tens of billions of dollars a year in revenues. There are many possible uses for such sums, including cutting other taxes, reducing the national debt, or spending them—each course with very different economic and political consequences. Yet if a system of tradable permits were to be established and those permits were then given free to existing firms—a natural instinct of politicians—a struggle over the assignment of rights worth many billions of dollars would surely follow, new carbon-using firms would face a competitive barrier, and the opportunity to reduce distortions from existing taxes would be lost altogether. Moreover, it is not at all certain that in the end the efficiency that was the whole object of the exercise would be achieved.

Still, optimists assert that the Kyoto Protocol goals can be met at low cost. For example, a report by several national laboratories concluded that "the costs to the U.S. economy are estimated to be near or below zero in this time frame."[2] How could this be? Simply by assuming that the U.S. government will act soon and efficiently on the matter; emission cuts will be made via a carbon tax or auctioned, tradable permits; tax revenues will be used to cut the federal deficit or to eliminate existing distortionary taxes; new technologies will be quickly developed and consumers and firms will just as quickly adopt them; and financial markets will adjust promptly and smoothly.

Those with memories of the oil crises of the 1970s will recall similar claims (then about using less energy rather than less carbon). The core belief in both cases is that pervasive

[2]M.A. Brown and M.D. Levine, "Scenarios of U.S. Carbon Reductions; Potential Impacts of Energy Technologies By 2010 and Beyond", the "5 Lab Study" (Oak Ridge, TN: Oak Ridge National Laboratory, September 1997).

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market failures lead consumers and producers to neglect valuable energy-conserving technologies. Thus, customers do not demand—and companies do not make—much more efficient automobiles or houses despite their intrinsic worth. Proponents of energy conservation claim that this could be remedied at little cost and quickly, but by and large it does not happen. During the oil crises of the 1970s, for example, people lowered thermostats during the crisis, but in due course turned them back up—much as they bought gas-guzzling sport-utility vehicles as soon as the price of gasoline came down.

THE ENERGY Modeling Forum (EMF) at Stanford University recently compared estimates of the costs of meeting the Kyoto targets made by ten modeling teams from around the world.[3] They show that with no international trading of emission rights, the United States would need to levy a tax on carbon emissions of between $90 and $400 per ton of emissions in 2010 to accomplish its Kyoto objectives; this is equivalent to a tax on coal of $70-$320 per ton (versus its current price of about $25 per ton!). Most of the teams estimate that such a tax would cost the U.S. economy between $45 and $200 billion a year (about 0.5 to 2.0 percent of 2010's GDP). They show similar, or even larger, costs for Europe and Japan.

In a world of models, this might not seem to be a very high price, but models have limitations. For instance, none of them includes the effects of carbon "sinks" (absorbers of gases such as trees) or of possible losses from unemployment or inflation. Nor do they note that, by 2010, about half of our electricity will be coal-fired—most of it consumed east of the Rockies where coal will fuel about 60 percent of electricity generation, with some states, such as Ohio, being almost entirely dependent on that fuel. Meeting our Kyoto obligations, then, could entail cutting the supply of electricity east of the Rockies by upwards of one-fourth. Many electricity-intensive industrial plants (e.g., aluminum and chemical ones) would be shut down. The implied limit on coal would shutter most of our steel industry, with our supply shifting to countries not constrained by the Protocol, which is to say the developing countries. Those developing nations would have to burn coal to make steel to ship to us, so there would be no net reduction in global emissions. More generally, if only the Annex B countries limit their high carbon-using industries, such industries will expand elsewhere, a phenomenon dubbed "leakage." Lest one think this implausible, consider that pollution controls in the advanced countries already lead to the construction of refineries and chemical plants in less fussy, poorer ones.

Relying on less optimistic assumptions than those of the ten modeling teams, the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy comes up with a much larger loss of U.S. output—about 3 percent of GDP by 2010 (roughly $300 billion in total, an amount equivalent to $960 per person or $3,800 for a family of four).[4] This is akin to losing a year of economic growth between now and 2010. The loss could be higher still if, as is perfectly imaginable, congressional and bureaucratic micromanagers decide which uses of carbon-based fuels are more or less socially worthy than others.

Properly understood, such conclusions point to the desirability of emission trading. That trading of pollution rights can radically lower costs is shown by the current system that allocates rights to emit oxides of sulfur to American coal-fired power plants. That system has cut costs about 85 percent below those that would be incurred by a command-type, non-trading one.

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[3] EMF, "Analyses of the Economic Energy and Economic Impacts of the Kyoto Protocol", Stanford University, April 1999 (to be published as a special issue by the *Energy Journal*).

[4] Energy Information Administration, "Impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on U.S. Energy Markets and Economic Activity", Washington, DC, October 1998.

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There are two main proposals on the table for international trading: one dubious, the other constructive. The former involves purchasing Russia's putative excess "rights" to emit. This "right" derives from the vast emissions of the Soviet Union in 1990, a consequence of its then large and inefficient heavy industry. Russia's emissions, however, have greatly shrunken in the interim. Under Kyoto rules, Russia may sell these rights. Unfortunately, though, most if not all of the expected decline in Russia's emissions between 1990 and 2010 has already occurred; buying these rights might not keep a single additional gram of carbon out of the atmosphere from now to 2010 (a possibility that has acquired the felicitous label of trading "hot air"). Moreover, Russia might sell its rights and then renege on limiting its emissions. After all, a country capable of defaulting on tens of billions of dollars of foreign debt is surely capable of defaulting on a commitment not to burn more coal.

A more promising proposal is a global trading system. The EMF models found that, on average, unrestricted global trading lowers permit prices by 80 percent. Janet Yellen, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, reports similar calculations including cases in which Europe and especially Japan would benefit even more than we would.[5] This observation makes the grousing of the Europeans about free trading of emission rights even odder; apparently they are under the illusion that Europe would not benefit greatly.

The devil definitely lies in the details. For a nation or a firm to sell the right to emit a kilogram of carbon implies agreement on an emission baseline relative to which the right can be bought or sold. This bears on another feature of the Protocol, that of Joint Implementation, according to which, say, a firm in Japan could pay for projects in India, with the resulting cuts in India's emissions credited in part to Japan. But there is a problem: how would the Japanese know that the projects offered by India were not ones that would have been built anyway? For such a scheme to be effective—for it to do any good for the atmosphere—countries will need to accept constraints on their total emissions. These limits will not be easily achieved, nor will they be easily verified. Games will be played; firms and governments will have powerful incentives to bias baselines up and emissions down because rewards and penalties will turn on the differences between them. Associated monitoring and enforcement problems have yet to be addressed, even in principle.

The complexities do not end there. The trading of emission rights, after all, means apportioning them in the first place. On what principle might this be done? Poor countries maintain that fairness requires, in effect, one person, one emission unit. This, of course, would force the industrial countries to reduce their use of energy drastically or to pay large sums to the more populous poorer ones. Rich countries contend, in turn, that current industrial structures (and emissions) must be recognized as the reality and taken as a given in any attempt at a solution. They no doubt would be willing to make some concessions, but how many? As Thomas Schelling has argued, the trillions of dollars involved constitute too large a sum for politicians to commit.[6] And, in the laudable pursuit of the least global cost, huge sums of money would be transferred to less developed countries—but only for energy projects. At the very least, then, the idea of paying others to emit less faces high hurdles.

PRESIDENT CLINTON argues that by adopting environment-friendly technologies we "will not jeopardize our prosperity—we will increase it." The new technologies the President has described in glow-

[5]Yellen, Testimony Before the U.S. House of Representatives Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power, Hearings on the impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on the U.S. economy, October 6, 1998.

[6]Thomas C. Schelling, "The Cost of Combating Global Warming", *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 1997).

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ing terms, such as improved fuel cells for autos and dramatically more efficient appliances, will indeed be needed if emissions are to be cut significantly. Fortunately, a number of firms, anticipating a growing public concern, are investing in greenhouse-related research. It does not take much imagination to foresee attacks by politicians and burdensome government regulations coming down the road. Nevertheless, radically new technologies will not be in wide use by 2010. For instance, the automobile firm doing the most to promote fuel cells, DaimlerChrysler, does not plan to introduce its first model before 2005. There will also be projects that the private sector will not adequately fund because of the well-known inability of private actors to capture all of the benefits from doing research. And there will be political risks; what rational firm, for instance, would try to develop a new nuclear reactor?

Nor have public monies been forthcoming. Congress, for instance, recently cut by half the President's requested funding increase for environmental technology research. The experience with publicly funded R&D has been so poor that one should not rush to criticize Congress on this count. The oil shocks of the 1970s stimulated publicly funded research on non-Middle East energy sources, much of which turned out badly, notably the studies dedicated to the nuclear breeder reactor and synthetic fuels. Yet the correct inference is not to abjure public funds altogether, but for the Congress and administration to pay much more attention to program design. There is no way to avoid government failures altogether, but the incidence could be held down by promoting private consortia, keeping most projects small, and by cost-sharing with the private sector.

The case for a tax on carbon. Given that the Kyoto system will not soon be repaired (if indeed it ever could be), Richard Cooper has proposed that countries simply adopt a common carbon emissions tax.[7] There is merit in imposing a small tax—and keeping the money at home, at least initially. For example, a tax of $10 a ton on fuel-derived carbon would increase the cost of coal in the United States by $8 a ton, and that of oil by $1 a barrel. Although the effect on emissions would be small, the $15 billion a year collected would enable other taxes to be cut, could finance an R&D program, and might be used to compensate laid off coal miners. Given the evidence so far on climate change, the bearing of larger burdens is not to be expected. But there is not much point in aiming for a uniform tax rate, not least because Europe and Japan already tax carbon much more heavily than do the United States and Canada.

Reversing the strategy. Kyoto supporters argue that accumulating evidence on climate change will alter the politics of global warming. That might happen, but more likely the same voices will end up pleading for the Kyoto deadline to be slipped to 2015, and then again to a later date, and so on. They are, in short, advocating the unattainable while neglecting the useful and more feasible. In fact, the strategy of committing to an emissions target and having consumers pay the ensuing bill has things exactly backward. We would be better served by a strategy that identifies useful actions with known costs, and accepting whatever emission reductions result. More R&D, for example, fits this approach, as its budget can be controlled and the new technology would be available for worldwide use. The imposition of a small tax on carbon would also fit. Now, too, is the time to start thinking about a domestic emission trading system (and an international one, provided like-minded partners can be found) as a step toward a global system.[8]

Shouldn't we focus on stabilizing the CO_2 concentration in the atmosphere? Brian Tucker has observed in these pages that the physics and economics of climate change support the

[7]Cooper, "Why Kyoto Won't Work", *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1998).

[8]Henry D. Jacoby, Ronald G. Prinn and Richard Schmalensee, "Kyoto's Unfinished Business", *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 1998).

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implementation of moderate remedies over an extended period of time.[9] In that spirit, aiming to stabilize the CO_2 concentration at, say, 550 parts per million by the latter part of the next century has merit. Although this level is much higher than the present one, it is much lower than what it is currently heading toward one hundred years hence. That proposal is not guaranteed to avert catastrophe but it would certainly improve the odds of doing so, and the cost would not be prohibitive. Capital stocks will have turned over in thirty or fifty years and there would be time to deploy new technologies. Long before then, China will have become the world's largest carbon emitter and India will be approaching the level of the United States. Both the economics and politics of climate change will be quite different.

With this goal in mind, global carbon emissions could increase from about 6 billion metric tons today to 10-11 billion tons in 2050 (versus 12-15 billion if business continues as usual), and then would come down steadily in the second half of the next century to about 4 billion tons by 2100. On this trajectory, Annex B emissions would peak in about 2030 in order to give developing country emissions room to grow before declining after 2050. Annex B emissions would rise about 25 percent above 1990 levels at their peak, followed by a rate of decrease of only 2-3 percent per year. Meeting this goal rather than the compressed Kyoto one would be far less costly.

The merit of shifting to a longer term goal, then, is that it makes economic sense and accords with much of the climate change evidence. The challenge today is to persuade governments to take low-cost actions now to reduce the rate of increase in their emissions, to invest in new technologies, and to construct a framework for trading emission rights.

The delegates to Kyoto declared victory, but after Buenos Aires their claims ring hollow. Congress will not allow Ohio's electricity supply to be slashed, nor will it soon pay China or India billions of dollars for emission rights. With luck, we will soon drop the Kyoto goals and start taking some modest but nonetheless useful steps. □

[9]Brian Tucker, "Science Friction: The Politics of Global Warming", *The National Interest* (Fall 1997).

As We Say, Not As We Do

The notoriously hard-nosed US Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, talking about the lamb dispute, said: "It is crucial that we use the tools of US trade laws . . . to protect American businesses and protect American workers against unfair or subsidised competition to the full extent.

"That's what has been done in certain cases involving steel and lamb and that's something we will do in future."

Even for an American bureaucrat this was a remarkably barefaced lie since it was unsubsidised Australian lamb that was being penalised in favour of the heavily subsidised American product.

But as in real war, the first casualty of a trade war is truth.

If this is the US at the very peak of prosperity and power, moreover, what horrible fallout might occur from a collapse of the US economy?

—Peter Robinson, *Sun-Herald* (Australia), July 18, 1999

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China's Democratic Prospects

A Dissenting View

George T. Crane

CHINA TODAY IS roiling with turbulent economic and social change. As a result, Chinese politics is transforming as well. The Communist Party (CCP) struggles to maintain its authority in the countryside, where peasants have given up on corrupt officials and seek community in clan organizations and new religions. In the cities, persistent nationwide efforts to establish a formal opposition party have left communist leaders scrambling to shore up their control. Information, once easily monopolized by the state, now flows through cell phones and computer networks, enabling communication and organization among those disaffected with failed Leninism. The territorial integrity of the state is being challenged by the separatist aspirations of Uighurs and Tibetans. At no time in its fifty years of power has the CCP faced such a wide array of potentially disastrous problems.

How the People's Republic of China manages these various perils, and in what condition the country emerges, is a matter of great moment for the world at large. If growing domestic frustration is deflected into a more aggressively nationalistic foreign policy by a desperate CCP, a catalogue of international issues could be adversely affected, from Taiwan to trade balances to thermonuclear weapons. Conversely, the long-standing U.S. policy of engagement looks forward to a gradual transition to capitalism and a subsequent democratization that is expected to moderate Chinese diplomacy. It would seem that, for American policymakers, nationalism is the enemy and capitalism the hero of China's tumultuous reformation.

Two recent articles in *The National Interest* challenge both of these formulations.[1] John Fitzgerald argues that the discourse on dignity inherent in any nationalist narrative may lay the conceptual groundwork for democratization in China. And David Zweig demonstrates that Chinese economic reform may work against the more optimistic hopes of engagement supporters. Is nationalism, then, really the hero and capitalism the enemy of Chinese democratization? Not quite. Each of these respected authors is only partially correct in his analysis. Indeed, the ineluctable logic of nationalism and economic reform may turn out to be less a determinant of China's future than the simple will of Chinese democrats and their oppressors.

Nationalism

JOHN FITZGERALD, an accomplished historian of Republican-era China (1911-49), makes a convincing argument that national identity is rooted in a

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[1]John Fitzgerald, "China and the Quest for Dignity" (Spring 1999); David Zweig, "Undemocratic Capitalism: China and the Limits of Economism" (Summer 1999).

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struggle for human dignity. Politics, he says, cannot simply be reduced to a calculated clash of material interests; it is driven by seemingly "irrational" aspirations and desires. People yearn for recognition and dignity, which are often found in the "imagined community" of the nation, and they will kill and die for the sense of solidarity that nationality imparts.

But what happens, Fitzgerald asks, when the state, in the name of the nation, tramples upon personal dignity? In China, momentous political disasters such as the Cultural Revolution, institutionalized corruption and official repression have robbed many individuals of their self-respect. When instructed by state leaders in the glories of the nation and the need to sacrifice for the collective, disillusioned individuals hesitate to identify with the common cause. The subsequent resentment produces the belief that national dignity must be built upon the personal dignity of the members of the nation. And here, Fitzgerald argues, is an opening for a move toward liberal democracy. In emphasizing communal dignity, nationalist rhetoric indirectly supports the ideal of individual dignity, the starting point for the defense of individual rights and the institutions that protect them. In his own words: "The politics of individual dignity, far from being antithetical, appears to be parasitical on the idea of national dignity."

Nationalism, by this reckoning, is a prerequisite for democracy. Indeed, Fitzgerald is willing to suggest that even chauvinistic arguments, such as those expounded by the authors of the various *China Can Say No* books, may inadvertently contribute to democratization. Although they blame foreigners for China's economic and political troubles, the resentment of the *Say No* nationalists also reflects their shame for a regime that denies its citizens their personal dignity. Their desire to invigorate China's national greatness will, therefore, set them on a path that "leads inevitably to challenging head-on existing constraints on thought, speech and assembly." Ironically, some of the most pointed Chinese nationalist critics of the 1989 democracy movement implicitly share the goals of that movement.

But there is a problem here. Nationalism *is* an obstacle to democracy—at least to liberal democracy. While Fitzgerald may be right in pointing out that the discourse of national dignity can enliven an appreciation of personal dignity, it is also true that state managers and jingoistic commentators regularly and powerfully assert a need to sacrifice individuals to protect the nation. This is especially true of nationalisms that are not explicitly built upon individualistic-libertarian ideals, which is to say most nationalisms. Liah Greenfeld points to the authoritarian tendencies of various European nationalisms:

> Originally nationalism developed as democracy. ... But as nationalism spread in different countries and the emphasis in the idea of the nation moved from the sovereign character to the uniqueness of the people, the original equivalence between it and democratic principles was lost.[2]

The problem is seen most clearly in the resurgence of ethnic nationalisms, collective identities that emphasize the cultural or racial "uniqueness of the people." The exclusionary possibilities are obvious: if the state is said to serve the nation, those who are not of the unique national community will not have a legitimate claim to be afforded full rights before the state. Koreans in Japan, Russians in the Baltic states, Turks in Germany all experience this kind of discrimination. In more extreme cases—Kosovo, Rwanda, Indonesia—ethnic outsiders are slaughtered and driven out to preserve an imagined ethno-national purity. Nationalism, in all of these cases, is quite actively used against democracy.

Chinese nationalism, in its official rendition, is not ethnically based; it is political and civic. But its anti-democratic tendencies are prominent. People of various ethnic back-

[2]Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 10.

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grounds are recognized as members of the Chinese nation, so long as they accept the legitimacy of the regime. A common political life, defined by the state apparatus and ideology, is central to the definition of the nation. Socialist China promises equal status for all who faithfully adhere to the "Four Cardinal Principles" (Marxism, Socialism, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the hegemony of the CCP), and equal opportunity for all who assiduously pursue the "Four Modernizations" (Industry, Agriculture, Science, Defense). If a person works against the state, however, he is not just politically suspect; he is, in the Maoist formulation, an "enemy of the people."

The problem of Chinese nationalism, then, is the failure of its civic promise. For the common political life is seen by many millions not as a glorious socialist fraternity, but as a corrupt and repressive ordeal. The subsequent resentment has, as Fitzgerald suggests, led some to a fervent belief in democracy. It has also led to other reconstructions of Chinese national identity centering on geopolitical power or neo-traditional greatness, neither of which supports a more democratic politics.

Military ideologues promote the idea of China taking its "rightful place" among the world's Great Powers and castigate anyone, particularly the United States, they see as thwarting China's rise. National reunification and territorial integrity are central to this project, producing a belligerent approach to the issues of Taiwan and Tibet. In this image of the Chinese nation, democracy is quite clearly subordinated to the drive for power and unity. Similarly, the CCP has worked hard since the massive legitimation crisis of 1989 to revive traditional cultural symbols and practices. As a part of an ongoing patriotic education campaign, Standing Committee member Li Ruihan undertook the most un-communist of acts when he laid a wreath at the tomb of the Yellow Emperor, the legendary progenitor of the Chinese people. Such actions are designed to link the CCP with China's past, a heritage that is used not to bring forth Confucian humanism, but to justify hierarchy, obedience and autocracy.

In these instances, nationalism is no friend to democracy. Indeed, for democratization to proceed, collectivist-authoritarian national narratives must be explicitly rejected in favor of individualistic-libertarian identities. Nationalism's democratic connotation must be clearly and completely articulated.

Capitalism

A MORE WIDELY held view is that democratization will emerge from economic reform. Faced with daunting inefficiencies and all too aware of the fate of the Soviet Union, Chinese leaders have gradually reduced the role of the central state bureaucracy in the economy. For twenty years they have improvised their way from one problem to another, from inflation to unemployment to international crisis, but they have, by and large, succeeded in creating a dynamic economy. Although CCP ideologues insist that they are building "socialism with Chinese characteristics", it looks more like a fitful transition to capitalism. Might this change, then, bring with it a new regime of property rights and an expanding bourgeoisie interested in protecting its hard-won wealth by means of democratic restraints on state power?

Probably not, argues David Zweig, a shrewd analyst of China's political economy. His case makes three key points: In China, markets are not free, workers cannot find work, and the world economy is not as significant as some may think.

China's economic reform, Zweig contends, involves not a decisive move to free markets but merely a shift of the locus of economic power. While central government bureaucrats in Beijing have given up a good portion of their previous authority, the beneficiaries of this change have not been private entrepreneurs. Instead, lower level public officials have seized strategic economic positions. Their corrupt rent-seeking behavior

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limits the rise of an independent bourgeoisie, and their vested interests sway them against private property and democracy. Why should they encourage change that might endanger the institutional basis of their wealth?

Beyond this powerful anti-democratic constituency, Zweig points to a mind-boggling unemployment level that brings threats of rising crime and social instability. Violence has erupted, confirming for CCP patriarchs their suspicion that democratization is a recipe for disaster.

A third impediment to democracy, Zweig maintains, is the institutional sclerosis that has characterized China's opening to the world economy. In theory, integration into world markets should spark competitive pressures to deregulate and privatize the domestic economy. The PRC, however, has resisted the liberalizing effects of global capital. "Opening China to the world, therefore", writes Zweig, "does not necessarily translate into opening China within itself."

Zweig thus makes a formidable case against the democratizing potential of Chinese economic reform and the more naive expectations surrounding U.S. engagement with China. While generally supportive of engagement, he cautions against placing too much faith in an "inevitable, rapid and smooth democratic transformation." This counsel is wise, but Zweig may be overly pessimistic.

Specifically, three recent policy initiatives suggest that an influential sector of the Chinese leadership is working hard to overcome the problems Zweig outlines. First, in July 1998 the CCP leadership announced that military, police and judicial units would have to divest themselves of their business interests. Hu Jintao, a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo and a close political ally of President Jiang Zemin, was quite clear about the intent of this measure:

> Facts show that the practice of engaging in business activities by these organizations not only seriously interferes with their performance of duties and affects their impartial enforcement of laws, but it could also breed corrupt and unhealthy practices, such as influence-peddling and 'putting money above all else.'

Actually implementing this ban will be difficult, as wily officers find ways to protect their spoils. But it is apparent that anti-corruption crusaders at the very top of the Party hierarchy take their missions seriously. Senior military officers, for example, forcefully championed the business closure campaign at the most recent session of the national parliament in March 1999.

Second, and at that same parliamentary conclave, an amendment to the state constitution was passed that enhances the formal recognition of private enterprise. The amendment defines private companies as "important components of the country's socialist market economy", and pledges that the state will "protect legitimate rights and interests of the private economy." Although hardly an adequate legal protection of private property, this measure is designed to promote, in the words of one parliamentary delegate, "a rule-based market that guarantees equal competition for state-run and private companies." And there are signs that more concrete actions are in the works to support private business: for example, the governor of China's central bank, Dai Xianglong, announced plans to increase commercial credit for private enterprises.

Third, in the run-up to Prime Minister Zhu Rongji's trip to the United States this year, Chinese representatives showed remarkable flexibility in World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations with the United States. By one account, China offered "huge openings of its markets—in telecommunications, banking, insurance and agriculture—in return for getting the country into the WTO."[3] Only political considerations on the American side kept the deal from being closed during Zhu's visit. The Chinese initiative highlights the reform

[3]David E. Sanger, "How U.S. and China Failed to Close Trade Deal", *New York Times*, April 10, 1999.

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strategy of an important part of the PRC elite, for the WTO will be powerful leverage against domestic protectionists.

Taken together, these three policies do not signal an imminent outbreak of free-market capitalism in China. They do not disprove Zweig, but they suggest another side to the story. Economic reform in China continues to move, however imperfectly, toward liberalization and privatization. Although Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji believe in the "superiority of socialism", they are pragmatic enough to recognize that the crushing economic problems they face, especially the specter of mass unemployment, can only be addressed by enlivening private enterprise and attracting global capital. In twenty years, Zweig's "quasi-private managerial class" may well be challenged by a rising bourgeoisie. While such a development would reinforce liberalization, it would not guarantee democracy, for bourgeoisies are, in general, politically ambivalent. If a repressive regime promises reliable profits, they may willingly accept limitations on political rights and activities (as they have, for instance, in Singapore). Moreover, the exigencies of capitalism may foreclose democratically determined political choices: tax rates can increase and regulations constrain only so much before global capital quickly seeks a safer haven. Capitalism can work for democratization up to a point; but, in China as elsewhere, a more meaningful democratic outcome depends upon particular political struggles.

Democracy

DEMOCRACY cannot be reduced to either nationalism or capitalism. Nationalist rhetoric may convey democratic ideals, but unless these ideals are institutionalized they can be overwhelmed by the authoritarian command to subordinate individuals to the fatherland. As for economic reform, a 1997 comparative study by Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limogi in *World Politics* argues for a more voluntaristic view of democratization, one that avoids deterministic emphasis on conditions, whether socioeconomic or rhetorical, and focuses on the strategies and actions of the protagonists and antagonists of democratic struggles: "Democracy is or is not established by political actors pursuing their goals, and it can be initiated at any level of development."

Elsewhere, in a rigorous little book, Przeworski outlines the political logic of liberalization and democratization.[4] A crucial prerequisite for a significant move away from dictatorship, he insists, is a reform group within the regime willing and able to act. Popular struggle alone rarely breaks authoritarianism.

A crisis of some sort, Przeworski suggests, may forge such a reform group and stir it to press against regime hardliners. A defeat in war, as with the Argentine loss in the Falkland Islands, might push a junta toward democratization; an international diplomatic crisis, such as Taiwan faced when the United States withdrew its recognition, might convince a Leninist party to accept real opposition; or widespread public demonstrations, which helped propel change in South Korea and East Germany, might present officials with a stark choice between heightening repression or compromising. None of these crises, in and of itself, automatically translates into liberalization, but any one may influence the political calculations of rulers in need of legitimation beyond sheer coercion.

Reformers, however, need partners in society, groups with whom they can compromise. Here, a moderate faction of opposition activists is required, people who are pressing for change but willing to accept some sort of accommodation with those in power. Moderates have to be able to control radical dissidents suspicious of outcomes short of immediate and complete democracy. If mod-

[4]Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), chap. 2.

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erates can do this, they might be able to attract regime reformers away from hardliners and develop a strategy for liberalization. Such has been the pattern, Przeworski demonstrates, in many transitions to democracy.

In China, the political elements for liberalization are taking shape. Within the regime a reform group emerged in the 1980s, centering around Party Secretary Hu Yaobang. After the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, during which reformers momentarily outmaneuvered hardliners, the liberalizing project was weakened but not destroyed. In November 1997 Fang Jue, a former government official, circulated a report that was said to reflect the thinking of the "Democratic Faction", a group of "mid-level and high-level" CCP members frustrated with the repression of the 1989 democracy movement and the lack of meaningful political change.[5] Although Fang himself is not a member of the Party, he is apparently close to some very important people, possibly Central Committee members, and his statement has been recognized by veteran dissidents Wei Jingsheng and Liu Qing as an "exciting first signal" that supporters of democracy are emerging within the CCP itself.

Fang and his fellow-travelers have called for competitive elections for all levels of legislative assemblies: local, provincial and national. The Democratic Faction supports the creation of formal political parties, to stand in opposition to the CCP, and informal non-political associations, a sort of Tocquevillian civil society. In the economic realm, it advocates further expansion of market forces and greater openness to global capital. It is also in favor of self-determination for Tibetans and the elimination of "all forms of armed threats and plans for armed solutions" in China's relations with Taiwan. The overarching theme is a comprehensive and consistent liberalism.

Fang has been jailed for advocating these ideas. The key point, however, is that political liberalization continues to be a contested issue within the Chinese power structure. Reformers are present and pressing for change. Indeed, some of China's highest ranking political leaders may be willing to contemplate political change, even if they would not go as far as the Democratic Faction's full agenda.

Li Peng, now chairman of the national parliament, is reliably hardline, and can be counted on to resist liberalization. Prime Minister Zhu Rongji, however, has revealed reformist sympathies. In his keynote address to the national parliament in March, he stated that the government should avoid "brutal measures" when confronted with popular dissatisfaction. He is more open to opposition to certain high-profile state projects, such as the Three Gorges Dam, and he has recognized the democratic aspirations of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations.[6]

President Jiang Zemin sends more mixed signals. He was tacitly supportive of the relaxation of political speech from late 1997 to mid-1998, during which authorities allowed, even encouraged, discussion of a wide range of political topics.[7] On the other hand, he has endorsed the call by Li Peng against any sort of "Western democracy" for China, and he has accepted the recent crackdown against dissidents attempting to create a formal opposition party.

If some top political leaders, in concert with the broader Democratic Faction of the Party, were to opt for modest political change, they would find a variety of potential allies in society. The activists involved in the Chinese Democratic Party, a formal opposition party founded in the summer of 1998 and still clinging to political life in spite of persistent government repression, have demonstrat-

[5]Fang, "A Program for Democratic Reform", *Journal of Democracy* (October 1998).

[6]Daniel Kwan, "Students Wanted Democracy, Says Zhu", *South China Morning Post*, April 15, 1999.

[7]Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "The Wait for the Promised Mainland", *South China Morning Post*, April 22, 1998; Susan Lawrence, "Agent of Change", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 23, 1998.

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ed a certain moderation in their strategy. They have attempted to work within the existing constitutional structure to maximize possibilities for political association and speech. They do not call for a wholesale transformation of the political order. Although their leaders are currently languishing in jail with harsh prison sentences, they could prove to be useful partners for regime reformers in any effort to stem more radical opposition demands. In addition, the families of victims of the 1989 Beijing massacre continue their campaign to "reverse the verdict" of that terrible tragedy. They, too, are not looking to overthrow the state, but simply for recognition that their fallen sons and daughters were not traitors.

A choice on the part of party-state reformers to accommodate any one of these groups would be a liberalizing move for the regime, not a sudden breakthrough to democracy but a fragile first step toward a less authoritarian political order. But such a choice is unlikely without some kind of pressure on the regime, a crisis that would embolden reformers and unbalance hardliners.

Not just any crisis will do. The costs of a cataclysmic meltdown of central authority might overwhelm any liberalizing tendencies. War is too dangerous and uncertain: the Clausewitzian fog might clear to reveal an even more repressive regime. A diplomatic crisis could be tricky as well. If such a situation was fomented from without, it could play into the hands of hardline military chauvinists eager to blame China's troubles on nefarious foreign forces. It would be utter folly and hubris, therefore, for U.S. policymakers to believe that they can engineer the emergency that pushes the CCP toward democracy. A dramatic reversal of U.S. engagement and a determined isolation of China would simply fulfill the prophecies of the *Say No* nationalists and strangle moderate political dissidents.

Perhaps the best prospect is an upsurge of domestic turbulence born of economic reform. If the hard-pressed working class, threatened by rising unemployment, organizes and gets out on the streets, what would—what could—the regime do? Call out the "People's Army" to again fire upon the people? A Solidarity-like trade union movement, generated from within China itself, might push regime reformers away from repressive political alternatives. Or what if the student movement were to regenerate and rally the millions of city dwellers exasperated with ever increasing official corruption? Or if a peasant-based, millennial religious movement were to challenge the state from below? Would the CCP leadership, some of whom have publicly rejected "brutal measures", be willing to take extreme action to prevail? While there is no guarantee that the choice for liberalization would be taken, power holders would at least have to contemplate seriously the merits of a political opening as against brutal suppression.

Is this far-fetched? Not really. Remember, a little over a decade ago, just before that remarkable Autumn of 1989, many of us were fairly convinced that totalitarianism was firmly entrenched in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. East German apparatchiks would never let the Berlin Wall crumble. Ceausescu was unmovable in Romania. Soviet militarists would never allow the Party to fall. How quickly things changed. □

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There Is No Mystery

Arnold Beichman

"THE PROFOUND, agonizing mystery of the Holocaust echoes through the generations . . ." So begins a recent *New York Times* review by Lawrence Van Gelder of an off-Broadway play, "The Gathering." Elie Wiesel says the Holocaust "can never be comprehended or transmitted." A Lexis-Nexis search, I'm sure, would find hundreds of couplings of "Holocaust" and "mystery." Often, a writer on the Holocaust will begin with "We will never understand . . ."

So what is this "mystery" of the Holocaust? We have no difficulty understanding the genocides traceable to Lenin or to Stalin; Adolf Hitler adapted with equally diabolical success their doctrinal contempt for the individual in the name of Utopia. The Stalin-ordered genocide of the Soviet peoples, anywhere from twenty to sixty million, is no mystery. Mao Tse-tung's slaughter of—who knows?—fifty million Chinese is no more of a mystery than is communist China's genocide in Tibet. There is no mystery about the killing fields of Southeast Asia where Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge murdered one-sixth of what had been a population of seven million. There is no mystery about Turkey's genocide of Armenians in the early part of the twentieth century. Of the fifteen million Afghans alive in 1978, more than a million are dead, thanks to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan two decades ago. There is certainly no mystery of Milosevic's killing of Kosovars, final figures not in yet. Why, supposedly, will we "never understand" Hitler's Holocaust?

I think it is time to stop defining the Holocaust as a "mystery." To call it such is to play into the hands of Holocaust-deniers and racists, and of the Nazis themselves, giving them an exculpatory dignity they do not deserve, as if they were tools, even victims, of some implacable destiny about which they could do nothing. How can we logically condemn what seemingly we cannot "comprehend"? Was the Shoah a natural disaster?

In reality, the Holocaust is not a "mystery", not even a pseudo-mystery as anybody who has watched Claude Lanzmann's nearly ten-hour documentary, "Shoah", knows. It is not a mystery as I learned when, as a ship news reporter in 1946, I used to go down to New York harbor to meet incoming ocean liners and one-time troop transports crammed with DPs (Displaced Persons was the euphemism in those days) who had survived Hitler's concentration camp universe. To the still beautiful Polish-Jewish woman I interviewed, who had been allowed to survive Auschwitz while her four young daughters had not, the Holocaust was no mystery at all.

The Holocaust was not the result of Adolf Hitler's random behavior. *Mein Kampf* offered a clue to Hitler's intentions—that he planned to exterminate the European Jews.

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The real mystery is why Hitler and his retinue were not taken seriously. As the historian Milton Himmelfarb has put it: No Hitler, no Holocaust. I think one could argue: No Stalin, no Mao, no Pol Pot, no genocide. These dictators used Marxism-Leninism as justification for mass slaughter of the "bourgeoisie" and "landlords", but in the end it was Stalin's personality that determined the Great Terrors. The real mystery here is why, at the height of the Great Terrors, Stalin, Mao and company had so many admirers among Western intellectuals.

It is certainly true that the Holocaust is unique, that, as Tony Judt has written, "there is no remotely comparable undertaking known to history, whether by intention, scale, methods, or outcome." But uniqueness does not a mystery make.

Now I will concede that if you are a practicing Jew, you might well ask: Why did God allow this calamity to overwhelm His "chosen people"? To that question, there are many, many answers, but the question remains. In Herman Wouk's fine novel, *The Glory*, about Israel's struggle to survive, one of the major characters, a General Barak, muses:

> We Jews are unique in history, that's plain. We lasted thirty centuries and more. Unless we're God's people, how come? But if we're God's people, why have we gone through such a thirty-century wringer of calamities? Have we really been all that sinful?

To such questions, there is no answer unless you dare face the pronouncement of Primo Levi: "God cannot exist if Auschwitz exists." I think of Levi's words as I look at Nazi photographs of Jews being rounded up in Poland: the old men look like my father and the young boys, all with their hands up, look like me as a seven year-old. Every Jew knows that had he been living in Europe during World War II, he and his family would quite probably have died in a Nazi concentration camp.

True, Jews represent a peculiar case. No nationality has been persecuted for so long, for so many centuries as have the Jewish people, often with churchly sanction. In large part such persecution persists because of a politico-cultural phenomenon we call anti-Semitism, more crudely put, Jew-hatred. There is no such thing today or in history as, say, a global anti-Cambodianism or a global anti-Russianism that demands, for some doctrinal reason, that Cambodians or Russians must be killed because of their religion or national origin. No one has fabricated a document such as the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" alleging that an international conspiracy of, say, Canadians or Ukrainians wants to take over the world. Indeed, anti-Semitism has no territorial limits; it is to be found in most civilized countries including the United States. That is no secret or mystery.

Nor is there any impenetrable mystery about why the Allies, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom, did nothing to stop the slaughter of the innocents during World War II. Statesmen who could have acted did nothing. They had weapons, they had armies, they had bombers, but not one bomb ever deliberately landed on a Nazi extermination camp. And, of course, after the camps had been emptied of the dead, the near-dead and the near-living in April 1945, it was much too late to do anything. The Holocaust is no mystery: Anti-Semitism leads to ghettos, concentration camps, torched synagogues and eventually to torched people. It always has. □

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Books

Koestler and His Jewish Thesis

Neil McInnes

David Cesarani, *Arthur Koestler: The Homeless Mind* (New York: Free Press, 1999), 656 pp., $30.

WHEN ARTHUR Koestler and his wife Cynthia jointly committed suicide in 1983, they left a bequest of about $1.67 million to finance psychic research and study of the paranormal. Universities in Oxford, Cambridge and London refused the money for fear of mockery; it was known that after staying at various Indian ashrams, Koestler had been investigating levitation and had installed a big weighing machine in his front hall because it would be easier to detect the loss of a few pounds than to measure the gap between stockinged feet and the carpet. People said Koestler had committed suicide twice, once by barbiturates, once by ridicule. No matter, Edinburgh University took the money; it had an academic psychologist who was willing to study these arcana. The web home page of the Koestler Foundation and its Koestler Parapsychology Unit explains how they labor on research into Psi (the conventional symbol for the unknown in an equation). Along with the money came the voluminous papers and a bronze bust of the benefactor.

This bust has just been withdrawn from public display because female undergraduates said they "felt uneasy under its gaze." Their unease began when British newspapers ran excerpts from David Cesarani's biography, notably passages denouncing Koestler as "a serial rapist." Actually, he adduces one indubitable victim of Koestler's brutal attentions, but thereafter his "series" consists of unsubstantiated gossip about other supposed cases, without names or evidence.

An authorized biography of Koestler (authorized by the estate, that is) is being written by Michael Scammel and will be published by Faber next year. Writing in the *Independent*, Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer, said that for this reason Cesarani was required to sign an undertaking with the Edinburgh University Library that he was not writing a biography of Koestler but a study of how Koestler's Jewish identity affected his life and work. He has come to the conclusion that, although Koestler always denied it and all his critics have missed it, Judaism was the secret core and center of everything Koestler ever did or thought. This has enabled the author to write a full-length biography of over six hundred pages, ostensibly without going back on his undertaking to the Library. Most readers will care nothing about that, but many will marvel at the methods Cesarani uses to reclaim, for causes that Koestler repeatedly disowned, one of the most productive, ingenious, courageous, volcanic and influential personalities of the century.

It is not clear why one would want to reclaim for Judaism or any other respectable

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cause the scoundrel Cesarani portrays. Even Koestler's old regiment of 1940, the French Foreign Legion, would not wish to reclaim this satyr, serial rapist, wife-beater and drunken, brawling oaf. Cesarani says he was all of those things, habitually. Koestler long ago told us (either directly or in authorized books by his wives and biographers) that he was some of those things, occasionally. So Cesarani's air of revealing unknown scandals is one of the less pleasant features of his book. If one has read the letters of his wife Mamaine (published uncensored after her death as *Living with Koestler* in 1985), the joint memoirs written with his next wife Cynthia, published in the same year as *The Stranger on the Square*, the authorized biography by Ian Hamilton, the memoirs of Simone de Beauvoir and her *roman à clef*, *Les Mandarins*, then one does not learn of a single new turpitude from Cesarani except the unsubstantiated allegation of serial rape.

Perhaps I should add the salacious detail taken from Koestler's diary that, at a time when he was running a "harem" of five girlfriends in London, he was eating three dozen oysters at a sitting and boasting he had got his "potency up to an average of two a day." Like two of his close friends, Bertrand Russell and Albert Camus, he had an extraordinary sexual appetite, plus the personal charm and magnetism required to indulge it. But Koestler was a Casanova, not a Don Juan. That is to say, he did not spurn the women he seduced but wanted to keep them as friends, and did for years, in some cases for decades. He even liked to have two or three past and present lovers at his table at once, a practice others found macabre. As Cesarani concedes, "If Koestler would not let go of ex-wives, mistresses and lovers, they were equally as reluctant to leave him."

EVEN THE READER least sympathetic to this aspect of Koestler's character begins to suspect that Cesarani's paint is laid on with a trowel when, inevitably, he is reminded of achievements that would be quite incompatible with a life of drunken depravity. One such was the friendship of many of the greatest men and women of the age, literally dozens of famous people who sought Koestler's esteem. They were as different as Willi Münzenberg, the Comintern propagandist, and Margaret Thatcher, whose party Koestler eventually joined; they included men notoriously difficult to get on with but who always had time for him, like George Orwell and André Malraux; and other buddies who ended up enemies for reasons entirely to Koestler's credit, like Sartre and de Beauvoir.

Another such achievement, which Cesarani notices but devalues, is Koestler's extraordinary record of public service. He was one of the most public-spirited men of his day, joining great causes, starting others great or small, shamelessly nagging his rich and powerful friends to do their bit. Finally, there is the achievement of two score books, some of them very long and based on years of research. A few of them are of enduring merit, some of the novels and the autobiographies; others amounted to perverse dabbling in outlandish and unscientific speculation. None of them could have been written by an habitual, dissolute drunk.

Behind all these achievements Cesarani sees a secret explanation:

> . . . it is clear that previous commentators and biographers have missed perhaps the most fundamental element of his story: that Koestler was a Jew. Far from being a particularistic observation that leads nowhere, his Jewishness makes him supremely representative of our age. To continue to neglect it is to distort his life and to undervalue his importance.

Of course, Koestler repeatedly denied this, but for Cesarani that just proves his point:

> Having turned his back on Israel, Koestler was once again the Wandering Jew. . . . For the harder Koestler tried not to be a Jew, the more he accentuated what it was that set him apart. In the second half of his life the suppression of

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> Jewishness was a conscious act that colored everything else he was or did. The attempt to flee Judaism was the quintessential act of the modern Jew: it was, itself, a badge of identity.

This sounds like an unfalsifiable proposition. Yet Koestler's friends have written to the British papers lately to deny it all the same, saying, for example, that Koestler "was not interested in his own Jewishness and found the subject boring" (Lord Kennet). Cesarani brushes aside such objections: "Koestler's obfuscation of his Jewish past and his Jewish identity deceived many commentators." He concedes that Koestler "renounced his Jewishness and consistently downplayed it thereafter", and that he "decisively rejected the realization of his Jewish identity [and] deliberately cultivated a de-Judaized image." But that is all what Cesarani calls "a smokescreen", which he has no difficulty seeing through to the abiding Jewishness behind it.

When Koestler devoted himself body and soul to a cause like, say, anti-communism, Cesarani says it was because he was "a secular sceptic yearning for a faith and a Messiah." When he had become a communist some years earlier, it had only been because he thought Stalin had solved the Jewish Question. When, later, he took an interest in genetics, it was because of anxiety about his inheritance of Jewish characteristics. When he broke with Zionism, the same causes were at work: "Despite his sniffiness toward Hebrew, his rampant prejudice against all sorts of Jews, and his endless reservations about the Israeli state and society, he had a deep almost desperate yearning to be accepted as a Jew and to belong to the Jews." The "depth" of this yearning is presumably the reason Cesarani cannot produce a shred of evidence for it.

Cesarani's trouble is that he simply refuses to take the secular attitude seriously. It lies at the basis of the modern polity but for him it is just a smokescreen hiding obstinate sectarian convictions. This blank refusal to accept that men and women can actually reason their way to the secular attitude to life has a wide application well beyond Jewishness. One thinks of the conservative historian Albert Sorel accosting his cousin Georges in a Paris street and exclaiming, "What's this I hear, Georges! You've become an atheist?" "Yes Albert, it's true." "But you're still a Catholic, I hope?" Georges (wearily): "Yes, Albert, still a Catholic." Refusing to take your interlocutor's opinions seriously dispenses you from finding answers.

IT IS worthwhile to look more closely at these sectarian beliefs that are supposed to be so ineradicable, in the present case to ask what is the Judaism for which Koestler is being reclaimed. It is not the faith, the theology. Judaism seldom means that nowadays, even in the Jewish academies, it seems. Jacob Neusner, the author of *Judaism in Modern Times* (1995), complained in the *Times Literary Supplement* recently (March 5, 1999) that Judaism today means not religion but the "ethnic culture of the Jews." The religion, he said, has been ethnicized and secularized so that students end up studying "the history of the ethnic group, the Jews." His article was entitled, informatively, "From faith to ethnic belonging: How the modern academy expunges religion from the study of Judaism."

Cesarani is a perfect example. He is a professor of modern Jewish history (at Southampton, England) and he does not seem very interested in religion. Perhaps he just shrank from the enormity of ascribing religious faith to Koestler. At all events, what he is out to detect behind Koestler's secular public front is not private religious feelings, but ethnicity, participation in Jewish folk ways and, connected with that, relations with Zionism. These are quite objective issues that we are all free to discuss, for personal faith and private sentiments hardly come into it.

Cesarani's method is to deny everything Koestler ever said on the subject. He warns us, as a careful biographer should, that his subject's version of his own life "needs to be treated with great caution." In fact, he treats it with total disbelief. Koestler's "doctored ver-

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sion of his life story" tells lies about a supposedly de-Judaized childhood and about his youthful embrace of radical-right Zionism. When Koestler says he disliked Yiddish, Cesarani comments, "Probably untrue." When he says he never encountered anti-Semitism until he went to Vienna University, Cesarani comments, "This is hard to believe." Other such statements are introduced with, "Koestler would have us believe . . ." Koestler's autobiographical writings not only backdate later opinions to earlier years (which is indeed the *pêche mignonne* of all memorialists), but are "full of lies", because "dissembling to himself and others was second nature.[1] His 'autobiography' was perhaps his most stupendous act of deception."

Only a determination to stand Koestler on his head, to make out of him something he said he was not, could prompt so harsh a judgment. In reality, his accounts of a long and adventurous career have stood up to examination, from being instantly thrown off a kibbutz for reason of unsuitability to being down and out in Tel Aviv, from wandering through Stalin's Russia to languishing in Franco's jails awaiting execution, from the fall of France to the crusade against communism, the whole spiced with confessions of his tippling and his rages. Of course he looked after his *amour propre*; about the night of the one rape of which he was undoubtedly guilty, he merely said he took a woman on a pub crawl through Hampstead, end of story.

But there is no reason to put him in a class with, say, a more famous memorialist, Chateaubriand, who was an inveterate, imaginative and repetitive liar, to the point where nothing in the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* can be believed without independent corroboration (especially if it concerns Napoleon, George Washington, Talleyrand or, above all, Chateaubriand). Incidentally, Chateaubriand, who was an energetic womanizer, handled the sex bit in his memoirs by saying that delicacy forbade mentioning his *bonnes fortunes*. The twentieth century was not delicate, so we get to know more about Koestler than we need to. And whereas Cesarani says Koestler's achievements were due to his unacknowledged Jewishness, all these turpitudes were due to his rejection of that heritage. That was what made him nomadic, unstable in his personal life, dishonest about his opinions.

More serious even than the intellectual insult of dismissing a man's firmly stated beliefs is the discredit thrown on his political engagement when it is diagnosed as sick messianism. Cesarani evidently thinks Koestler is vulnerable to this sort of amateur psychoanalysis because of the variety of causes he took up with so much enthusiasm. Others might see here evidence of political courage and social responsibility, or at least of the disposition John Grigg detected when he called his 1975 essay on Koestler "The Do-gooder from Seville Gaol." He was an extraordinary activist. From being an exuberant student leader in Vienna, he went on to Zionism, then to communism and then to dedicated anti-communism.

In 1940, barely out of concentration camp, he was pushing a plan to get up to one hundred thousand people out of French camps to the Virgin Islands for the duration of the war. After that war, he donated all his U.S. royalties to the Fund for Intellectual Freedom, which he founded to assist writers who were refugees from the Soviet bloc. He was the eloquent, dynamic and flamboyant moving spirit at the founding of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin in 1950. Later in that decade, he led a long and determined campaign against hanging, and he deserves much of the credit for the abolition of capital punishment in Britain. He founded the Arthur Koestler Award for literary or artistic work by inmates of British jails, a scheme that has prospered mightily since 1962. He embarrassed many of his British friends by throwing

[1]What I call the autobiographical writings include *Scum of the Earth* (1941), *Dialogue with Death* (1942), *Arrow in the Blue* (1952), *The Invisible Writing* (1954) and the authorized books by two of his wives and Ian Hamilton, mentioned above.

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himself into a dog lovers' campaign against the six-month quarantine imposed on dogs that so much as set paw on the Continent. Years after his death, he has won that one: the British government is about to issue dog passports, so that dogs vaccinated against rabies can come straight home from foreign trips. Koestler knew not to worry about embarrassing friends. Those who were embarrassed by his strident "Manichaeism" in Berlin in 1950 (such as Hugh Trevor-Roper and A.J. Ayer) look in retrospect like faint-hearted defectors from a splendid intellectual cause.

NATURALLY, the Koestlerian cause that Cesarani privileges is Zionism. Here as elsewhere Koestler went to extremes. He began as a missionary for Vladimir Jabotinsky, who urged massive illegal immigration into Palestine to found an anti-socialist Israeli state on both banks of the Jordan. When Koestler said farewell to Zionism in *Thieves in the Night* (1946), he was understood to be supporting the Irgun faction of militant extremists. More controversial than those radical postures was the line Koestler took once the Israeli state was established: Jews everywhere, he said, now had a clear and compulsory choice, either to emigrate to Israel or to assimilate where they were without reserve or residue. This became known as the Koestler Thesis, and was, maintained Frank Knopfelmacher, "next to *Darkness at Noon* his most important contribution to politics."[2]

Knopfelmacher, who lived for a time on a kibbutz next to the one that threw Koestler out, said the Koestler Thesis was "far less shocking than it sounded to the Anglo-Jewish communities" of the time, and it would be nice if such a clear choice existed. Unfortunately, it did not:

> It is by way of the Jewish lobby alone, which in turn depends on the political influence of a *distinctively Jewish* and hence *unassimilated* American Jewish population, that U.S. protection [of Israel] is secured. Thus the assimilation of Jews in North America, the largest and by far the most influential center of the Jewish diaspora, and the survival of Israel have become incompatible.

Prior, I would have thought, to those practical political difficulties (if such they be) arises the question whether Koestler had any right to force Jews to face up to his supposed choice. People who seek to impale you on the horns of a dilemma are often trying to hide the multiple choices that in fact exist between their stark alternatives. In a free society there is a perfect right to adopt any degree, and any combination, of assimilation and Zionism one chooses, and Koestler's dramatic either/or is quite bogus. Isaiah Berlin told him he was being tidy to the point of being totalitarian.

He gave much graver offense to Cesarani by publishing, at age seventy-five, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and its Heritage* (1976). In it, apart from restating the Koestler Thesis in its baldest terms, he drew on reputable historical authorities to write a lively potted history of the Khazars, a Turkic people in the Caucasus who in the ninth century were converted to Judaism. The hordes that swept in from Central Asia soon became ashamed of their spiritual nakedness, and most turned to one or other of the universal religions. The Khazar leaders apparently decided that if they became Christian they would be clients of Byzantium, and if they became Muslim they would be subject to the Caliphate; Judaism was a choice for independence.

As other hordes succeeded them, the Khazars were dispersed. That some of them went with the Magyars into Hungary seems established. What became of the rest? Koestler could not resist the supposition, which had been envisaged by the historians, that most Khazars went via Ukraine to Poland. The conclusion he jumped to was that the Eastern Jewish community was pri-

[2]Knopfelmacher, "Arthur Koestler: The Mole of God", *Quadrant* (October 1982).

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marily Khazar-Turkish in origin and had no physical connection with Palestine.

When you check Koestler's sources and look at later studies of the question, the historians are much more tentative. D.M. Dunlop, in *The History of the Jewish Khazars* (1954), said, "But to speak of the Jews of Eastern Europe as descendants of the Khazars seems to involve the Ashkenazim in general, i.e. by far the greater part of the Jewish people in the world today, and would be to go much beyond what our imperfect records show." Peter Golden, in volume one of his *Khazar Studies* (1980), said, "Further speculation along this line, while interesting, can bear no fruit as long as we have neither sources nor linguistic materials to support it." Moses Shulvass' *History of the Jewish People* (1982) concludes that the destiny of the Khazar Jews "basically remains an enigma."

In his cautious moments, Koestler would say that the Khazar origin of most European Jews "should at least be regarded as a theory worthy of discussion", but he would soon fall into saying that the Khazar element in Polish Jewry "is substantial, in all likelihood predominant." He concluded, "I am aware of the danger that [this book] may be maliciously misinterpreted as a denial of the State of Israel's right to exist." A visit to Radio Islam's web site will indeed show how the book is still being used today to deny the Jews' links with Palestine and hence the legitimacy of Israel.

Anticipating such arguments, Koestler said Israel was not founded on a hypothesis or on mythology but on international law, the UN decision to partition Palestine in 1947, underpinned by the ethical foundation of a century of Jewish immigration and peaceful pioneering. "The problem of the Khazar infusion a thousand years ago, however fascinating, is irrelevant to modern Israel." Cesarani does not agree, and he assails *The Thirteenth Tribe* with abuse and misrepresentation. Koestler, he says, made "selective use of facts for a grossly polemical end", namely, the "propaganda objective" of separating the Jews of the diaspora from the Jews of Israel. The book was "risible as scholarship" and was "slaughtered" by the critics (of whom he cites a quite particular selection).

If Cesarani and those critics are incensed by Koestler's adventurous speculations, they should relax: Ernest Renan sold the pass a hundred years before.[3] Renan maintained that the mass conversions to Judaism in Greek and Roman times had already deprived Judaism of any ethnographic meaning, i.e., had severed the physical (but not the spiritual) links with Palestine. Just as the Prophets had predicted, Judaism became a universal religion: "*Tout le monde y entrait.*" Most of the Jews of Gaul and Italy, Renan said, came from these conversions. As for the Jews of the Danube basin and southern Russia, Renan was already pointing at the Khazars: "These regions contain great masses of Jewish populations who probably have little or nothing ethnographically Jewish about them." Later, Max Weber in *Ancient Judaism* gave the reason for the mass conversions of Hellenist and Roman times, "the great epoch of Jewish proselytism", namely that, regardless of race or nationality, "Jewry attracted people who found their religious satisfaction in the purity of the ethic and the power of the conception of God." These were the facts that, still later, it became urgent to recall in order to counter the absurd Nazi theory of the Jewish "race." In that perspective, Cesarani's arguments are reactionary.

WHEN ALL is said and done, Koestler's standing with later posterity will depend not on these skirmishes (and certainly not on his "natural philosophy"), but on the novel *Darkness at Noon*, his 1940 masterpiece. Cesarani makes a predictable discovery about it: "The most important fact about the novel is the one that is least remarked upon in critical studies: the central character . . . Rubashov is a Jew." He

[3]Renan, "Le Judaisme comme race et comme religion" (1883), in *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1947), vol. 1, pp. 925-44.

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deduces this from Rubashov's patronymic, Salmanovitch (Solomonson). This had been pointed out to Koestler, who replied that he had not intended, and had not even noticed, that he had "made my hero a Jew." In line with his policy of disbelieving everything Koestler said, Cesarani says this disclaimer is "improbable", "suspicious", "implausible" and "perverse." As if to show that he is not reducing the novel to ethnicity, Cesarani then makes the large claim, "The final rout of the Soviet imperium in 1989-90 began with the publication of *Darkness at Noon*"—in 1940! If only it had been so easy.

In fact, French and Italian communist intellectuals dismissed *Darkness at Noon* as "naive", although the French Communist Party made clumsy, and counterproductive, efforts to limit its sale. It did not discourage recruits. François Furet said,

> I remember reading Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* with passion, about 1947, without the reading of it dissuading me from joining the communist party soon afterwards. I admired the fact that the judge and the accused could agree together to serve the same cause, one as executioner, the other as victim. In this philosophical version of the Moscow Trials, I loved to see the march of historical reason—which Koestler on the contrary wanted to denounce as a barbarous cult.

Worse, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in *Humanisme et Terreur* (1947), actually took the side of Gletkin, Rubashov's interrogator and torturer. Once grant that you are living through an historical revolution, said Merleau-Ponty, and Gletkin's logic is irrefutable: the end justifies the means.[4]

If the Stalinists and their apologists did not believe the moral message of *Darkness at Noon*, did the author himself always believe it? When, six years later, he published his novel about the struggle for an Israeli state, *Thieves in the Night*, critics immediately pointed out that his characters were invoking History to justify violence. Had Koestler too gone over to Gletkin's side? He replied that he was defending only limited, carefully calculated violence, but Rubashov had already answered that, by saying that the human factor made such calculation impossible.

Darkness at Noon has been voted one of the hundred best English-language books of the century, which was wrong because it was written in German and translated by Koestler's mistress of the moment, in a version that contains infelicities that the publisher should have weeded out by now. Such quibbles aside, it *is* a masterpiece, but a masterpiece of *fiction*, in a class with James Hilton's *The White Knight* as a depiction of penitentiary psychology. It is not a convincing "contribution to politics" because it did not solve the problem the author set himself, the part of moral expediency in politics, the problem of ends and means when the stakes are high. But then none of us has solved it, as the day's news from Palestine and the Balkans regularly reminds us. □

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[4]See Dominique Desanti, *Les Staliniens* (Paris: Fayard, 1975), p. 39; François Furet, *Le Passe d'une illusion* (Paris: Laffont, 1995), p. 479; M. Merleau-Ponty, *Humanisme et Terreur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947).

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Counting the Dead

Eliot Cohen

Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 563 pp., $30.

THE WAR THAT roared into flame eighty-five years ago this August was surely the dominant event of this century. It consumed the lives of perhaps ten million soldiers (probably considerably more), smaller but nonetheless vast numbers of civilians, smashed the Austro-Hungarian, Turkish and Russian Empires, and administered lasting shocks to their British and French counterparts. It created the conditions for the political success of communism and, ultimately, Nazism as well. In the bloody womb of its conduct and consummation sprouted the seeds of another, even more ferocious and pitiless global war that broke out less than twenty-one years after the first one ended, and that completed the wrecking of an entire system of world society and politics. It marked the entry of the United States onto the stage of world power even as it augured the collapse of the Powers of Western Europe.

The war stands, to the philosophically minded, as a warning that the progress of mankind cannot be conceived of as something smooth and inevitable. That a Europe which had known a general and fruitful peace for nearly two generations, during which time the suffrage spread, freedom of thought extended and science advanced, could erupt in mass slaughter still boggles the mind. Unthinking optimism about the capacity of modern man for decent adjustment of his differences surely died in the trenches, alongside the choking and blasted young men who fought there. Ever afterwards, those who believe that humans have, at last, escaped the coils of international conflict have had to make their arguments with a nervous glance over the shoulder at the shadow cast by the ossuary of Verdun—that warehouse of soldiers' bones that mocks the descendants of Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss. The arguments and excuses—the participants were democratizing states at a particularly fragile point in their development, their uniquely poisonous nationalisms have ceased to exist, the military technology of the time alone permitted the slaughter—may all be partially true, but the hecatombs remain, and with them an ineradicable residue of anxiety about society and statecraft.

For Americans, perhaps, the war looms less large. It led to the deaths, by all causes, of some 116,000 soldiers, perhaps twice as many as perished in Vietnam and a third as many as died in World War II. For Europeans, however, no forgetfulness is possible. One cannot understand the politics of France after 1918, for example, without considering the fact that to be in one's late teens or early twenties in 1914 meant a one in four chance of dying in battle, and an even higher chance of suffering wounds. Total French deaths amounted to roughly 1.3 million out of a population total of under 40 million; this is a death toll more than ten times that of the United States, which had a population roughly two and a half times the size of France's in 1914. The sufferings of other European states, including Britain and Germany, were only marginally less. The British Empire, which mobilized a total of nearly 9 million, suffered roughly one-third that many casualties, of whom nearly a million died. Germany lost 1.8 million killed out of a population of 65 million; its soldiers also had less than an even chance of surviving the war unscathed. Serbia, with something under 3 million people in 1910, lost 127,000 dead and more than that wounded—at least 8 percent of the total population killed or maimed.

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For a European in his forties like Niall Ferguson, the author of *The Pity of War*, the reality of war goes back only two generations, to a grandfather wounded in battle, and in some ways even to his own, as he recalls the inscriptions on the walls of the school that he attended. Small wonder that he, like thousands of historians before him, has tried to make sense of this war. He has done so in a book that has attracted tremendous popular acclaim, *The Economist* going so far as to say that "at one massive stroke he has transformed [the] dismal intellectual landscape" of previous writing about the war. That is a powerful claim for a book by a prolific economic historian who has not, until relatively recently, spent much time on this conflict. The book's attractions reflect the culture of contemporary highbrow popular history: it dares to explore the history that did not but might have happened; it treats the dicta of conventional wisdom like so many soft pitches ripe for the smashing swing of the bat; it praises the losers and mocks the winners. It offers these entertaining constructions but undergirds them with a foundation of scholarly concrete, slabs of statistics and reinforcing bars of footnotes and bibliographic references.

AT THE HEART of Ferguson's book are ten questions, among them, "Was the war inevitable?" "Why did Britain intervene?" "Why did the economically superior Allies not crush the Central Powers more quickly?" "Why did men stop fighting?" "Who paid for the peace?" The chapters largely, but not entirely, follow the outline implicit here. The author's professional background clearly exercises a disproportionate influence; nearly a third of the book consists of economic history, complete with some of the most recondite statistics imaginable. Nonetheless, a spirited style and an audacious prose carry the reader along, even as he wonders why, precisely, it was necessary to inform him that daily salaries in the construction sector in France declined by exactly 22.6 percent during the war, whereas the hourly wages (a different metric, of course) in the same industry in Britain fell by only 14.2 percent.

Unlike in the case of a novel, it is fair in a review of an historical study to give away the end. World War I was not a tragedy, but "an error"—"the greatest error of modern history", in fact. One might think that this is merely a rhetorical flourish, designed to leave the reader struck at the author's intellectual daring in reducing a global calamity to the same category as a missed turn-off on a summer driving holiday. In fact, however, this phrase informs the book, and it is worth pondering its meaning. By it, Ferguson appears to mean that the war was the result not of deep forces churning away in European society and politics, nor of willful, if reckless, decisions taken by powerful men, but a slip, a common mistake, a goof. It is a very different use of the word than occurs in Churchill's summation of the issue:

> One rises from the study of the causes of the Great War with a prevailing sense of the defective control of individuals upon world fortunes. It has been well said, 'there is always more error than design in human affairs.' The limited minds even of the ablest men, their disputed authority, the climate of opinion in which they dwell, their transient and partial contributions to the mighty problem, that problem itself so far beyond their compass, so vast in scale and detail, so changing in its aspect—all this must surely be considered before the complete condemnation of the vanquished or the complete acquittal of the victors can be pronounced.[1]

Ferguson rejects the word "tragedy"; his failed statesmen were not the able but baffled and fallible men that Churchill knew; they were merely screwups.

Ferguson does have a villain, one of the least likely of all: Sir Edward Grey, Britain's foreign secretary, and the man who in his

[1]Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, vol. I, 1911-1914 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), pp. 5-6.

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view is responsible for Britain's intervention in the war. Once Britain was in, the world was doomed to four years of agony and calamity. As the author self-consciously puts it: "To the economic historian, the outcome of the First World War looks to have been inevitable from the moment the majority of Asquith's Cabinet swallowed their Liberal scruples and opted for intervention."

Ferguson makes the case that had Britain not intervened in the war, the Germans would have won, and merely imposed upon their neighbors something like a European Union before its time. No years of slaughter, no bitter peace, no Weimar, no Bolsheviks, no Hitler, no World War II—all if one man had refrained from preaching to his doubting colleagues a silly idea, that one could not let Germany overrun Belgium and smash France. It is a tantalizing and horrifying thought, this notion that by shrugging off their military agreements, the violation of a Belgian neutrality, and several centuries of British support for a balance of power in Europe, British statesmen would not only have avoided a cataract of blood, but actually brought about something rather desirable.

It is an argument, however, that collapses upon examination. As Ferguson himself notes, the Germans (who, it will be remembered, inflicted upon France and Belgium a war that both countries were eager to avoid) behaved with a brutality that in its time was remarkable—even if it represents the small change of atrocity by our current, debased standard. In less than two weeks in August 1914 the Germans shot some 6,000 Belgian and French civilians in cold blood. These were not the bystanders whose maiming or death fall under the rubric of "collateral damage", but hostages and reprisal victims. In the diplomatic and military documents of the time one does not see the scarifying bent on mass murder that characterized German behavior thirty years later, but it is bad enough. "In this war it is a question for Germany, not only of her whole national existence and of the continuation of the German Empire, created through so many bloody sacrifices, but also of the preservation and maintenance of German civilisation and principles as against uncivilised Slavdom." Thus Chief of the General Staff Helmuth von Moltke to Gottlieb von Jagow, secretary of state, on August 4.[2] To think that the Germany of 1914 would have been a kindly master of a crushed Europe—a Europe that could only have been subjugated at the point of a bayonet—is implausible, to say the least. To believe that the kind of smashing victory that Ferguson wishes his grandfather's and great-grandfather's generations had ceded to Wilhelm II and his advisers would have induced moderation in Europe's new master society is no less implausible. It ignores not only the unpredictable consequences of such an intoxicating victory in a nation's psyche, but the hard realities of the plans for annexation and domination that Germany had begun to draft by the fall of 1914 in the event of a decisive victory.

IN THIS as in other cases, Ferguson's account of the onset of the war is distorted by British self-absorption. The war originated as a Continental conflict, at the heart of which was the desire of Austria to smash Serbia, which posed a mortal threat to the continued existence of the creaky Dual Monarchy, and the willingness of Germany to risk a general European war in 1914 rather than wait for what it expected to be worse circumstances later on. There is nothing novel in Ferguson's treatment of the crisis of July 1914; like his predecessors for half a century, he relies on Luigi Albertini's massive three-volume work on the origins of the war. But unlike Albertini, he pays scant attention to the decision-making where it counted, in Vienna, Berlin and, to a lesser extent, St. Petersburg. It was there, and not in London, that the war was bred. It is poor history, but worse moraliz-

[2]Immanuel Geis, ed., *July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War: Selected Documents* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 357.

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ing, to pin on the anxious and divided counsels of Great Britain, which had no hand in the original crisis, the outbreak of this calamity.

Now, any historian who uses the word "inevitable" in connection with something as stupendous as World War I should arouse his readers' suspicions. But the key in the offending sentence quoted above is the word "to an economic historian." Ferguson is just that, which may account for the predominance of economic history and the paucity of military history in this account of a war. There are tables of every economic statistic conceivable here, but no maps; there are gruesome trench and camp scenes in the two collections of photographs in the book, but no shots of generals, politicians and headquarters.

The truth is that Ferguson cares rather little about how the war was actually fought; to explore that one would need, after all, to say something about who those generals and statesmen were, and why they did what they did. It is, in fact, those parts of the book that attempt to touch on military history that make a well-informed reader most uneasy. Circular arguments (e.g., "men fought because they did not mind fighting") are little more than cute and empty phrases. There are absurd attempts at quantification: "it cost the Entente powers $36,485.48 to kill a serviceman fighting for the Central Powers, [but] it cost the Central Powers just $11,344.77 to kill a serviceman fighting for the Entente." There are misleading representations of the conventional wisdom advanced in order to enhance the author's apparent boldness in knocking it down (that, for example, the dominant view of Western Front generalship is that military leaders on all sides were fools and incompetents, when for the last thirty years military historians have painted a far more complicated picture). And there is, finally, the advancing of palpably perverse arguments—that, for example, the German army had not been beaten in the field in November 1918, even though the months preceding the armistice saw mutinies in the field and at home, and the steady advance of British, French, Australian, Canadian and American forces to a depth of between forty and ninety miles from the front lines of 1914-18. This latter accomplishment, though trivial by the standards of other wars, was phenomenal in a conflict where men measured progress by the yard, and where a permanent advance of a mile or two was rare.

The author of *The Pity of War* quotes approvingly Bertrand Russell's dictum that the "objective of war economics" is "maximum slaughter at minimum expense", and he goes on to say that "by this yardstick" the Central Powers "won" the First World War. The ensuing argument concerns war finances, but it may be taken as well as a premise upon which much of the book rests. The Central Powers do seem, at some level, to have done a more efficient job of killing than their enemies did of killing them. But to understand why, one needs to explore questions barely touched upon here, such as the quality of general staff systems, in which the Germans in particular had a distinct and important advantage. One would have to mention as well the advantages accruing to those who fight a war on someone else's territory. Germany could afford to yield the ruined battlefields of France and Belgium for the tactical advantages of better ground; for France, in particular, there was no psychologically acceptable alternative for much of the war but a ceaseless onslaught alternating with an inflexible defense. The enemy had, after all, occupied a tenth of France and much of its most valuable coal and iron-producing districts.

One would have to, as well, explore the decisions and strategy, the tactics and operational planning, the technology and technique of war in 1914-18. The astonishing inefficiency of the American military, for example, cannot be explained without understanding the overwhelming preoccupation of General Pershing with creating a vast, autonomous American army that would fight its decisive battle in 1919, not, as eventually transpired, in 1918. One cannot come to terms with the failed Allied offensives of 1917 without a detailed examination of the German with-

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drawal to the so-called Hindenburg Line, which deprived potentially powerful British and French blows of their punch. One cannot understand the maldistribution of Entente forces in 1917-18 without unraveling the tangled policy and war-making that hurled British and French armies into the Balkans, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, and that had created a chasm of confidence between statesman and soldier. And one cannot intelligently examine the question of whether the war could have been brought to an earlier end without meticulous scrutiny of the lost opportunities of the Dardanelles campaign of 1915. In short, one cannot hope to explain or understand a war without studying military history.

World War I cries out for a magisterial work of synthesis. There are entire libraries of books devoted to its study; there are massive studies of most features of the conflict in a dozen languages, mastery of at least half a dozen of which is probably necessary to comprehend the war fully. The truth is that, as a scan of the footnotes in this and similar books reveals, no historian can hope to master the multiple archives for a documents-based study of the entire war. He or she must, instead, read widely and deeply, in a project that must necessarily consume decades of a scholarly career. The desire to be daring and provocative runs contrary to what is needed in the study of military even more than of other kinds of history: empathy, sober judgment and good sense. These qualities may not scintillate, and they may attract little notoriety when rendered in writing, but they remain the bedrock of scholarship, particularly in the case of this, the harbinger and origin of so much of the twentieth century's ghastliness. The ghosts of World War I still haunt the third and fourth generations of their descendants. Not to understand why their war turned out the way it did would be the true pity. □

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Thoroughly Modern Freddy

Michael Howard

Giles MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 416 pp., £25.

FREDERICK THE GREAT has always puzzled posterity. "We hardly know any instance of the strength and weakness of human nature so striking and so grotesque", Macaulay famously wrote of him, "as the character of this haughty, vigilant, resolute, sagacious blue-stocking, half Mithridates and half Trissotin, bearing up against a world in arms, with an ounce of poison in one pocket and a quire of bad verses in another." Giles MacDonogh points out in this latest biography how each generation has formed a different image of Frederick, all equally false. For nineteenth-century Germany he was the great Founder of their Nation—in spite of the fact that he hardly spoke a word of German, thought that German singers sounded like "the neighing of a horse", and regarded his own subjects as "nasty animals" who had to be ruled in their best interests by an enlightened elite. For Germany's enemies, he was the cre-

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ator of the "Prussian militarism" that was to disturb the peace of Europe for two hundred years. For military buffs he is one of the "Great Captains" of history, whose campaigns should be studied to find the philosopher's stone of military success; while for some he was the archetypal Hero sketched by Carlyle, a Nietzschean Superman grimly battling against impossible odds, whose picture hung on the wall of the *Führerbunker* in Berlin and whose example was to inspire Adolf Hitler in the last days of the Third Reich.

In all these images, other aspects of Frederick's character are suppressed; his gifts as a flautist and a composer, his wide reading, his patronage of the arts, his friendship with Voltaire and other luminaries of the Enlightenment, his huge literary and epistolary output, and the circle that he created around himself of a talented and witty group of men friends, the sexuality of at least some of whom was highly ambiguous. Giles MacDonogh makes a gallant effort to escape from the traditional stereotypes, and to depict Frederick in the round by "letting him speak for himself." The result is a pleasantly written and very readable biography based largely on Frederick's printed writings and correspondence; but the author's very lack of selectivity means that, in spite of all his efforts, he ends up by presenting yet another misleading picture of his subject.

Frederick sought relief from the huge pressures of office, partly through his music (he played the flute for at least an hour every day and composed about two hundred concertos for it), partly through manic composition of very indifferent poetry, but very largely through a huge correspondence with the *illuminati* of Europe as a whole, and a group of intimates in particular, among whom Voltaire was pre-eminent. MacDonogh allows this correspondence to mold his own portrait of him. Frederick's military exploits are dealt with very summarily indeed, and his administrative achievements get a bare mention; whereas great attention is given to his lavishly documented patronage of the arts and to his relations (usually bitchy) with his intimates at court—particularly with Voltaire, who gets an entire chapter to himself. The picture that emerges is consequently one of a brilliant and talented amateur of the arts who ruled his country in his spare time and was also, when he had to be, a successful soldier; but one for whom these occupations were disagreeable duties interfering with his preferred civilized lifestyle among a group of cultured cronies. It is an image no more misleading than some of the others with which we are familiar, and perhaps one that Frederick himself might have relished. Nonetheless, it comes nowhere near capturing his real greatness and historical significance.

Frederick had a mind of truly Napoleonic range and scope, and as with Napoleon his military genius was only one facet of his overall ability. But unlike Napoleon, he had a conscience, one inherited from generations of Calvinist ancestors. Certainly he did not believe in God, although he found it convenient that others should do so; but he did believe in a rational world order, the understanding of which imposed on the minority who possessed it both the right and the duty to rule those who did not. "The true function of man", in his view, "was to work for the common good, the fatherland, and only those who did were worthy of respect." If, like the Corsican, Frederick had had to make his own way in the world, it might have been a different matter, but as it was he inherited power and responsibility, and with it a sense of duty that disciplined what might otherwise have been an egotism as huge and irresponsible as that of Napoleon himself.

Frederick reacted in youth against the sottish parochialism of his father's court, flaunting the affectations of an exceptionally clever young man and falling into very dubious political company—for which he was ferociously and very effectively punished. But his father, Frederick William I, was not only sottish and parochial. He had also created, out of the sprawling lands of Brandenburg-Prussia, the best administered, the most prosperous and the best-armed principality in Germany, and for its size—a bare two and a half million

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souls—in Europe. Elsewhere the power of rulers was still shackled by aristocratic privileges, local immunities, cantankerous estates, or an immensely powerful Catholic Church. Frederick inherited what was already a modern, centralized, efficient state, administered by a docile bureaucracy, defended by a highly professional army; and one over which he had unfettered personal control.

Frederick William had not intended to create such a state: he blundered backwards, as it were, into the modern age, his eyes fixed on the past. Like his contemporaries, he regarded his lands not as a "state" but an "estate", a property to be prudently administered and passed on intact to his successors. Politically as well as socially he was intensely conservative. He exacted total obedience from the underlings he protected, and to his own overlord, the Emperor, he displayed loyalty that never wavered. In the words of the historian Gerhard Ritter, he "created a modern power system without the slightest aptitude for power-politics." But his son possessed such an aptitude almost to excess. Having inherited power, he was determined to use it.

IF ONE HAD to create a stereotype for Frederick—and it is hard to understand him without doing so—it would be as the first thoroughly modern European ruler; the first, that is, to shake himself free of the mindset, both of the Middle Ages, with its hierarchical system of obedience based on landed tenure and ecclesiastical sanction, and of the Renaissance, of the Prince using his power for purposes of personal glory and *virtu*. Frederick had an absolutely clear, and entirely novel, concept of his function: it was to be the first *servant* of the State. MacDonogh quotes what he rightly describes as one of Frederick's most famous lines, written within five years of his coming to power:

> A prince is the first servant and first magistrate of the State; it is he who decides to what use taxes should be put, he levies them in order to be able to defend the state by means of the troops he maintains, in order to uphold the dignity with which he is invested, to reward service and merit, to establish some sort of balance between rich and poor, to relieve the unfortunate in every walk of life, in order to breed magnificence in every limb of the body of the State in general. If the sovereign has an enlightened mind and an honest heart, he will direct all expenditure for the commonweal and to the greatest advantage of his subjects.

This concept of the State as the sole fount of legitimacy and power was as old as Bodin and Hobbes, but no previous ruler had accepted and internalized it as did Frederick. We know what Louis XIV thought of the State: *l'état c'est moi*. He himself embodied the State, a very different matter from serving it. For Frederick, on the contrary, the State was not the mere instrument of his own greatness, but rather the other way around. Certainly he had a strong sense of the "magnificence" owed to his princely office, which enabled him to indulge his enjoyment of building and decorating palaces. He did so not with the baroque splendor of his predecessors, but in a light-hearted and informal rococo that matched his own aesthetic preferences.

But the formalities at his court were minimal, and his own appearance, always in a military uniform increasingly shabby, patched and snuff-stained, carried to extremes his contempt for the formal dignities of royalty. Voltaire, Algarotti and the other chatterers who surrounded him provided necessary light relief; but his principal occupation, as he described it, lay in "combating ignorance and prejudice in a country where an accident of birth has brought me to power, to enlighten minds, to cultivate morality and make the people as happy as it suits human nature, and as the means at my disposal permit." At least so he wrote in 1770. But in fact his principal occupation during the first half of his reign had consisted in waging war, and during the second half, repairing its damage.

Frederick had always seen waging war as part of his job specification: "The arts are cul-

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tivated in peacetime", he observed bleakly, "only under the protection afforded by arms." But he neither foresaw in prospect, nor relished in retrospect, the amount of war that he was to let himself in for when, within a few months of coming to the throne, he seized the province of Silesia from the imperial authority to whom his father had always been so slavishly deferential. In his decision to do so, there was certainly an element of Renaissance rhodomontade: the youthful prince, soaked in the heroic literature of the classics, wanted to show the world that he had *cojones*.

But there was also a calculated element of state-building. The lands of Brandenburg-Prussia were spread thinly and indefensibly across the thin soil of north Germany, a poor relation to its wealthy neighbors Saxony and Bavaria and Hanover, and a minor player on the European scene. Silesia, one of the wealthiest of the Habsburg provinces, lay adjacent to Frederick's own lands. Its possession increased their population and income by half and furnished a solid power-bloc in the center of Europe. With the acquisition of Silesia, Brandenburg-Prussia—which Frederick himself described as "a mongrel state, part electorate, part kingdom"—became indisputably the Kingdom of Prussia, a fully paid-up member of the club of European Powers, one whose ruler sat at the top table with France, Russia and the Habsburg Empire.

The entry costs into the club were tolerable: five years of intermittent warfare that made the reputation of the Prussian army and established Frederick as the foremost soldier of his day. It was the expenses of membership that were to prove so crippling. The Austrians remained implacable, and found in the Russians an ally who feared Prussian expansion toward their own borders. Prussia's ally, France, changed sides, and the acquisition of England in her place could provide little immediate help. Watching his enemies closing around him, Frederick launched a preemptive strike against the still neutral Saxony—a precedent that German statesmen were to recall in 1914—and found himself involved in a life-or-death struggle with a coalition of powers whose combined population of ninety million dwarfed his own five million—a precedent that Adolf Hitler, if no one else, would recall in 1945. And "life or death" was no exaggeration: if Frederick had been defeated, the Kingdom of Prussia would probably have been erased from the map for good. No wonder he carried an ounce of poison in his pocket. "I am in no way thinking about glory, but about the state", he wrote in his darkest hour, 1761, "and if it succumbs . . . I must shed this burden of life."

IT DID NOT succumb, and for better or worse, Prussia survived, having lost a tenth of its population and with its economy in ruins. So did Frederick, a prematurely old man at fifty, who had to spend the last two decades of his life putting the pieces together again: rebuilding a shattered economy, encouraging the middle classes in their entrepreneurial activities, pioneering agricultural improvements, rounding off his territories by acquiring, in the share-out of the first Polish Partition, the lands of the lower Vistula that linked his territories with the outpost of East Prussia and colonizing them with good peasant stock. All this was "state-building", but certainly not "nation-building." Frederick remained oblivious, and disdainful, of the great stirrings in German literature and philosophy that were already well under way in the last decades of his reign. And it certainly involved no trace of democratization, for like many Third World leaders in our own day, Frederick found modernization a great deal simpler if it contained no element of popular participation. He bequeathed to his successors the political structure he had inherited: an absolute monarchy, an efficient bureaucracy, a bourgeoisie given every opportunity to enrich themselves, and a nobility confirmed in all their privileges in return for a monopoly of posts in the civil service and in what was universally regarded as the finest army in Europe. Twenty years after Frederick's death Napoleon was to smash the whole thing to smithereens.

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This was hardly Frederick's fault. He had always known that Prussia was boxing far above its weight, and only his personal genius had enabled it to do so. His successors muddled their way into a "total war" that they were quite unequipped to fight. Yet even after the catastrophe of 1806 the foundations Frederick had laid remained intact: an industrious and well-educated middle class and an uncorrupt bureaucracy able to ride the crest of the Industrial Revolution; a grimly professional army; and a population on the whole happy to do what it was told. Thus equipped, Bismarck's Prussia was able, two generations later, to reenter the Great Power club, and be accepted there as a stabilizing influence for a further twenty years. Frederick can certainly not be blamed for all that went wrong after that. □

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Globalization's Boosters and Critics

Jacob Heilbrunn

Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999), 394 pp., $27.50.

John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism* (New York: New Press, 1999), 262 pp., $25.

IN THE early 1990s, many American politicians and economists viewed Germany and Japan as emerging superpowers that were well on their way to supplanting the United States. The chastened former Axis powers, so the thinking went, had figured out that economic, not military, power was the key to success. They were investing in their infrastructures and educating their work forces for the era of globalization, while America, by contrast, was foolishly racking up higher and higher budget deficits—partly as a consequence of military spending for its protectorates in Europe and Asia—and creating, at best, dead-end McDonald's-type jobs. In his 1992 bestseller *Head to Head*, MIT economist Lester Thurow captured one version of the conventional wisdom: "Future historians will record that the 21st century belonged to the House of Europe."

Seven years later, the opposite seems to be the case. In the wake of the American-led incursion into Kosovo, Europe is scrambling to create its own joint military force and has watched helplessly as the euro plummets. Matters are even worse in Asia. Japan is stuck in a recession that its own Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi has recently called a "depression", and Tokyo bureaucrats have been left fuming impotently as Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers periodically lectures them about the virtues of the American model. Under President Clinton and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's direction, the United States has eliminated its chronic budget deficits, created fourteen million new jobs since 1991, and enjoyed low interest rates and low unemployment, thereby vanquishing the old bugbear of "stagflation." Prosperity has not only allowed Americans to go on an unprecedented spending binge, but probably also saved President Clinton during impeachment. Indeed, so impressive has the American

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resurgence been that it would be absurd to quarrel with newspaper magnate Mortimer B. Zuckerman's judgment that globalization will help ensure "a second American century."

Or would it? Doubts about the effects of globalization, whether they end up proving justified or not, have become increasingly commonplace. In the United States, first Ross Perot, then Patrick Buchanan tapped into the domestic discontent of blue-collar workers spurned by a Clinton administration focused on free trade and the middle class. Most recently, a United Nations study suggests that while globalization may benefit the United States—the annual sales of General Motors, we learn, are greater than the gross domestic products of Thailand or Norway, while Ford generates more income than Saudi Arabia—much of the world is being left behind. And so, if the debate was once about whether America was headed for the skids, it is now about whether globalization will simply trigger an anti-American backlash.

On the one side is the triumphalist camp, which includes everyone from the Clinton administration to Zuckerman to Sebastian Mallaby in the pages of *The National Interest*. The triumphalists see the United States as poised to spread its institutions and values around the globe. On the other side are the debunkers, who view the United States as intoxicated by the idea of a new crusade on behalf of the free market and democracy. Globalization will only ride roughshod over small communities and identities, substituting an empty Western materialism for local traditions. This school includes academics such as Samuel Huntington, who has argued that "the essence of Western civilization is the Magna Carta not the Magna Mac. . . . What, indeed, does it tell the world about the West when Westerners identify their civilization with fizzy liquids, faded pants, and fatty foods?"

Thomas Friedman belongs firmly to the first of these camps. A triumphalist *par excellence*, Friedman has drawn on several years of columns and travel for the *New York Times* to produce what will probably serve as the Ur-text for globalization advocates. The heroes of his tale are not the bemedaled generals and pinstriped diplomats of yesteryear; instead, they are the new captains of industry—hedge fund managers and media moguls walking around in T-shirts and Reeboks as they tap away on laptop computers, making and breaking Third World economies.

No one will accuse Friedman of excessive subtlety. His style, you might say, favors the demotic. It is loose and garrulous and grating. In his introduction, Friedman explains that "Being the foreign affairs columnist for *The New York Times* is actually the best job in the world. I mean, someone has to have the best job, right? Well, I've got it. . . . I get to be a tourist with an attitude." Friedman is a talented journalist whose penetrating judgments made his previous book *From Beirut to Jerusalem* essential reading, but in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* it is hard to escape the feeling that something has gone awry—that sloganeering has displaced analysis. Given his access to world leaders and business tycoons, and given the uncertainty besetting the world economy, Friedman could surely have made a strong case for the effects of globalization—but this is not it.

Friedman's argument that the era of globalization represents a fundamental break with power politics is not new, but it is put forward with evangelical zeal. He does not argue; he instructs. Thus, "there's now just the Fast World—the world of the wide-open plain—and the Slow World—the world of those who either fall by the wayside or choose to live away from the plain in some artificially walled-off valley of their own, because they find the Fast World to be too fast, too scary, too homogenizing or too demanding." But, Friedman asserts, the "Slow World" can only resist progress so long before it chokes on its own backwardness. He portrays globalization as an autonomous force, one that, ultimately, cannot be resisted or contained by any nation. Indeed, in Friedman's hands, globalization becomes a kind of surrogate Marxism, a deterministic force that reshapes humanity and nations (which is why Marx and Engels

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both admired capitalism for its ability to uproot what they saw as the traditional ignorance of Africa and Asia, and anticipated with approval a capitalist-induced "interdependence" of nations in the *Communist Manifesto*).

BUT IS globalization really an autonomous force? Or is it a homegrown American product? In his most persuasive chapter entitled "Revolution Is U.S.", Friedman comes close to accepting that it is the latter. Globalization, he concedes, has an American face: "It wears Mickey Mouse ears, it eats Big Macs, it drinks Coke or Pepsi and it does its computing on an IBM or Apple laptop, using Windows 98, with an Intel Pentium II processor and a network link from Cisco Systems." But if you believe, as Irving Kristol has maintained in these pages, that a government should elevate its citizenry, then the spread of the worst aspects of American culture raises serious questions. It may be that the export of the products of mass American consumer culture has negligible effects on high culture, the province of an elite, but Friedman never really addresses the global effects of American culture, and, in the end, he rather airily dismisses the potential for anti-Americanism: "O.K., O.K., so the rest of the world thinks we're obnoxious bullies and is envious of us. So what?" Countries may envy the United States, says Friedman, but basically they view us the way other players and teams viewed basketball star Michael Jordan: "none of the other teams really wanted to see Michael Jordan injured or retire, because anytime he came into town every seat was sold. He was the straw that stirred the drink for them all."

Nor does Friedman adequately confront the social upheaval created by globalization. He calls himself an "Integrationist Social-Safety-Netter." But apart from endorsing a grab-bag of government social welfare programs, it is left unclear exactly what this fancy label means. If, as Friedman maintains, the nation-state is withering away, then who is to provide the safety net? The nation-state, after all, has historically been the guarantor of a modicum of physical and material safety. A better discussion of this question is to be found in Ethan B. Kapstein's splendid new book, *Sharing the Wealth*. As Kapstein observes, the reason the rest of the world is resisting liberal democratic capitalism is not mysterious: "the United States has adopted a position toward labor that is fundamentally at odds with the historical experience of other societies." Thus, Germany, France and other countries on the European continent have resisted cutting social benefits and downsizing their work forces precisely because they fear domestic instability. They may calculate that a lower standard of living with tariff barriers is preferable to domestic turmoil. The impediments that the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder faces in attempting to emulate Clinton and Tony Blair are an object lesson in how tenaciously many societies adhere to the older model of the welfare state.

Something similar may be taking place in Asia. Friedman makes much of Malaysia's supposed inability to withstand international economic pressures, but so far, Prime Minister Mohamad Mahatir's decision to impose capital controls to stop the flow of assets out of the country has not resulted in catastrophic financial losses. And then there is Japan, a country that has vigorously resisted adopting a free-market economy in favor of shielding its population from the vicissitudes of unemployment. Even if it is suffering economic difficulties, the surprising thing is not that Japan has taken longer than expected to pull out of recession, but how well it has coped. There are few, if any, visible signs of economic suffering in any part of Japan. It may well be that many countries calculate that the cost of potential social upheaval accompanying globalization exceeds the purported economic benefits.

If Friedman passes lightly over the question of culture, he completely evades that of the role of power politics. When he does mention security issues, it is simply to wave them away as harmless revenants of an earlier age. He was quickly embarrassed for doing so.

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In his "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention", Friedman notoriously maintained that "no two countries that both had McDonald's had fought a war against each other since each got its McDonald's." The war with Serbia that coincided with the publication of his book instantly put paid to that theory. To be fair, Friedman's theory was based on the old political science model, first formulated by Seymour Martin Lipset in the early 1960s, which holds that an emerging middle class—characterized in Friedman's view by a McDonald's—will push for democracy. Democracies, in turn, or so the political scientists tell us, are less prone to fight wars, and certain not to fight one another. Friedman might have explored these theories, but, in his concern to boost globalization and pour scorn on what he sees as its benighted opponents, he caricatured them.

IF FRIEDMAN is the high priest of the free market, John Gray is its main apostate. Gray—late of Oxford, now at the London School of Economics—made his name as a conservative political thinker whose writings influenced Margaret Thatcher and company. Now, in his brilliant polemic *False Dawn*, he has reversed field. The Anglo-American model of capitalism, he says, has spun out of control. Just as Friedman praises the market for any economic and technological advances, so Gray seeks to pin all social and economic ills on it. But how much more persuasive is Gray's view of events than Friedman's?

Certainly, Gray writes with verve and panache, and his book makes for absorbing reading. It covers everything from the rise of industry in the Victorian age to the Mexican economy to the current ructions in Russia. Unlike Friedman, Gray points squarely to the French Enlightenment assumptions behind globalization, which were picked up and developed by British radicals in the nineteenth century. He might have noted that it was Cobden and Bright who equated free trade with peace. Cobden called for "as little intercourse as possible between Governments, as much connection as possible between the nations of the world." And it was Jeremy Bentham who envisaged the ideal society as being run along the lines of an efficient prison system. Today, the idea of a universal civilization is espoused pre-eminently by the free-trading United States—a country with one of the highest incarceration rates and one in which, as Gray would have it, a good chunk of its ostensibly free population cowers behind high walls and electronic security devices.

Gray's view of America could scarcely be bleaker. Corporate executives are free to award themselves munificent bonuses in return for downsizing much of their work force. While the upper class profits from a soaring stock market, pushed, in part, to new heights by corporate layoffs, the middle class is being conditioned by a rapacious elite to accept its new state of immiseration as the inevitable by-product of necessary economic risk. So great is wealth inequality in the United States that it resembles the Philippines or Brazil more than it does other major economies. Gray even indicts America's low unemployment figures as deceptive: locking up prisoners, after all, artificially suppresses unemployment rates.

Yet oddly enough, American optimism remains undented. If the Enlightenment faith in the perfectibility of man and society became subsumed in anti-communism during the Cold War, it now animates the American projects of a universal free market. Accordingly, Gray's targets are what he views as the ideologues of the free market in England and, above all, the United States. In his view, "The elegant apologies for imperfection in Santayana and Lippmann, Mencken and Voegelin are scarcely historical memories at a time when conservatives have become ranting evangelists for global capitalism. Today, American conservatism is a crankish and sectarian species of Enlightenment ideology—nineteenth century libertarianism." Indeed, conservative doctrine amounts to nothing more than "a ranting eulogy of technology, a demonization of government and a

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militant assertion that all social evils are problems soluble by market forces."

Strong words. No doubt there are some conservatives who would fit this description, but not all conservatives are free-marketeers, and not all free-marketeers are conservatives. It is Patrick Buchanan and a number of congressional Republicans who oppose free trade. It is Bill Clinton who has relentlessly attempted to expand free trade and who signed, in August 1996, the Welfare Reform Act. For all of Gray's huffing and puffing about the evils of the market, it seems hard to dispute Clinton's success. As the United States heads into the next century, the old discussion of how to lower budget deficits has been replaced by one about how to spend a trillion-dollar surplus. The problem that conservatives face is in coming to terms with their successful transformation of American society, one that has created an unprecedentedly affluent middle class largely indifferent to social strictures. For Gray, however, the United States is not even an economic success story, but a winner-take-all society in which racial tensions are rising. But Gray's dyspeptic, one-dimensional portrait of a United States divided along class lines completely overlooks the dynamic effect that the creation of wealth has had: even the *New York Times* noted in a front-page story a few months ago that the notoriously tenacious black youth unemployment is sinking as teenagers are able to procure jobs leading to stable careers.

SIMILARLY, Gray's complaints about the free market in Britain miss the mark. Tony Blair has proved even more fiscally conservative than his predecessor John Major; one of his first actions was to hand over authority for setting interest rates to the Bank of England. Is it an accident that England alone among the European countries enjoys a booming economy, while Germany and France sputter along, saddled with high unemployment, low labor mobility and a sinking euro? Surely not. A stronger argument that Gray might have made against globalization is that the widespread perception on the Continent that only the European Union can inject the iron of fiscal control into anemic economies is mistaken. The plight of the euro suggests that national control ensures greater efficiency and productivity than a corrupt bureaucracy in Brussels could ever hope to achieve.

Indeed, the fitful performance of the European Union, coupled with the Asian economic crash, ought to prompt doubts about whether the nation-state really is headed for obsolescence. Even more telling has been the steady uptick in violent conflicts, from Africa to Europe. With this upsurge in ethnic violence and the renewed jockeying of the major powers—India's explosion of nuclear weapons, China's noisy assertion of its claims to Taiwan, and North Korea's launching of the Taepodong missile—it seems ludicrous to maintain that, in the post-Cold War era, power politics has suddenly and mercifully been annulled by economic advances. The truth is that the assertion of national pride, a quest for status and recognition and self-determination, far from disappearing, all appear to be making something of a comeback in the post-Cold War era. And so the notion that something called globalization is taking, or has already taken, place is more than a little facile and obtuse. If America is to retain supremacy in the twenty-first century, it will not be as much a product of economic as of military strength and purpose. Endless debates about globalization may turn out to be a mere sideshow.

No doubt economic activity has taken on new forms with the emergence of multinational companies and the internet. To evidence this as the dawning of a new age is, however, another matter. Former Prime Minister Harold Wilson was already complaining about the manipulation of sterling by the "gnomes of Zurich" in the 1960s and Chris Patten, in his recent memoirs of his years as governor of Hong Kong, notes that the Asian collapse is not really all that unprecedented, that corrupt bankers and speculators have always been with us. As far as

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the road to prosperity is concerned, the economic lessons of the past two decades are clear, and both Bill Clinton and Tony Blair have understood them. But even trillion-dollar surpluses cannot cure all of society's ills, let alone bring about the parliament of man. Market booms and crashes will come and go, but the nation-state is here to stay. □

Jacob Heilbrunn is senior editor of *The New Republic.*

Indochina Without Americans

Peter W. Rodman

Stephen J. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and the Causes of War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 300 pp., $16.95.

AMERICANS, in their narcissistic way, think of the Indochina conflict as coterminous with their own experience. Thus, the Pentagon Papers (and newly emerging Nixon administration documents) provide the source material for a cottage industry analyzing American decision-making during the Vietnam years, American military strategy in Southeast Asia, and the dilemmas of America's role in the world. Much of this is useful. But it is strange how little interest there is in the idea that other players in that drama—Hanoi, Beijing, Moscow—made calculations and miscalculations of their own, and that there is a larger story here.

How refreshing, then, to have Stephen Morris' new book that illuminates this wider context. The Americans are only Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in this version of the play, coming intermittently on the scene in the middle, then disappearing. Morris sheds considerable light on one of the most intriguing aspects of the Vietnam War—the relationship between Vietnam and Cambodia, which turned out to be a surrogate for the relationship between the Soviet Union and China, which of course turned out to be one of the most important strategic dimensions of the whole Indochina conflict and indeed of international politics in the last fifty years. The significance, even from a parochial American perspective, should be obvious. For it was precisely the Chinese and Soviet dimension that Lyndon Johnson so misjudged as we entered Vietnam; it was that dimension, too, that Nixon exploited in 1971-72, with somewhat more success, as we sought to extricate ourselves honorably. After the debacle of 1975, the genocidal Khmer Rouge and Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia clouded the next twenty years of Southeast Asian politics, with the Chinese and Soviets shaping events even more decisively. Only recently has the United States sought to get back into the game in that part of the world in a serious way, concerned as it is about the new power of China.

Thus, Morris performs a great service with his diligent and extraordinary (indeed unique) research on the Vietnamese-Cambodian-Soviet-Chinese interrelationship. He has unearthed a wealth of new material, especially from Soviet Communist Party Central Committee files. It includes reports by the Soviet ambassador in Hanoi of his conversations with North Vietnam's top leaders, Soviet analyses of Hanoi's political and military strategies and capabilities, evaluations of Sino-Vietnamese relations, and even top-secret North Vietnamese Politburo reports covertly acquired by Soviet intelligence. These gems are supplemented by French historical and intelligence files, interviews with key fig-

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ures (including Sihanouk), and Morris' extensive knowledge of the history of Indochina and Indochinese communism. He offers, as well, some general conclusions about the role of ideology and political culture in shaping the sometimes irrational conduct of the actors, especially the Khmer Rouge.

ONE OF Morris' main revelations concerns Hanoi's tilt toward Moscow in the Sino-Soviet split. He makes a convincing case that it occurred earlier than is generally believed—specifically, in the 1968-70 period. Vietnamese communism had never been a maverick "national communist" movement of the Tito model; Morris shows how Hanoi loyally followed Moscow's leadership of the international communist camp. North Vietnam was always rather orthodox in its ideological positions and seemed almost always more comfortable with Moscow's version of communist "internationalism." In the early 1960s, however, Hanoi, increasingly dubious about Khrushchev's ideological "revisionism", adopted a pro-Chinese position in the Sino-Soviet dispute, seeking to ensure Chinese as well as Soviet support for its unfolding war effort in South Vietnam. Hanoi's media echoed some of Beijing's strictures against Titoism, the nuclear test ban treaty, and other aspects of Moscow's alleged accommodation with "imperialism."

But after Khrushchev's ouster, Hanoi shifted to a policy of neutrality between Moscow and Beijing. And during the late 1960s, as China consumed itself in the Cultural Revolution, Hanoi once again found Moscow's leadership more congenial. Soviet material aid was substantial, and Hanoi also found Brezhnev's Third World policies to its liking. In addition, Morris shows how Hanoi sided with Moscow, apparently on ideological grounds, on a number of international issues on which it could easily have remained neutral. When the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 and China denounced it, North Vietnam defended the invasion and reprinted *Pravda* articles espousing the Brezhnev Doctrine. When the Soviets and West Germans consummated Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* with a treaty in 1970, China called it a fraud and an example of Soviet capitulation to imperialism; but Hanoi hailed it as a Soviet victory over German "revanchism." North Vietnam followed the Soviet line in opposing Nimeiri's coup in Sudan in 1971 (China backed Nimeiri), and in endorsing the 1974 leftist coup in Portugal (while China warned Europeans to beware of Soviet "expansionism"). In Angola in 1975, when the Soviets and Chinese backed opposing sides in the civil war, Hanoi, like Moscow, committed itself to the Marxist-Leninist MPLA.

These are issues in which North Vietnam had no direct stake. Nor was China any threat to North Vietnam during this period. Indeed, Hanoi relied on Chinese as well as Soviet arms supply and backing during the Vietnam War. Yet Morris makes a case that the North Vietnamese Politburo thought Beijing was more guilty than Moscow of causing the schism in the communist movement. Though both Beijing and Moscow were flirting with the Americans, Hanoi thought Beijing's policy more of a betrayal of the "internationalist" cause.

Hanoi was not an easy client for Moscow, taking Soviet weapons for the struggle against the Americans but not confiding in Moscow with respect to its own plans. The Soviet ambassador in Hanoi repeatedly complained that the North Vietnamese told him little about developments in the peace negotiations with the Americans. And when Marshal Pavel Batitski, the Soviet air defense commander, visited Hanoi in March 1972 to hear Hanoi's arms requests, the North Vietnamese told him nothing about their plan to launch the biggest military offensive of the war immediately after his departure. Nor did Hanoi inform Moscow of its plan to invade Cambodia at the end of 1978.

The timing of Hanoi's tilt toward Moscow is not just a matter of correcting a date in the historical record. Morris' main point is that Hanoi went too far and too fast in its tilt toward Moscow, and thereby needlessly antagonized Beijing. The Sino-Soviet conflict

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was thus imported into Southeast Asia, complicating Hanoi's situation and raising the stakes in the Indochina struggles, including Vietnam's relations with the Khmer Rouge. Morris thinks this a serious miscalculation by Hanoi, prompted in his view by ideological reflexes as much as by any historical or geopolitical tension with China. This explanation goes against much conventional wisdom, but he makes a strong case.

MORRIS' portrait of the Khmer Rouge is illuminating, though here his evidence only confirms the general view of the Khmer Rouge as ideological purists—that is, fanatics—who worshiped the wildest extremes of Maoism. In July 1973, for example, even after the Congress had dictated a halt to all U.S. military operations by August 15, the Khmer Rouge launched an attack on Phnom Penh. The attack—a costly failure, blunted by U.S. bombing—was motivated, according to intelligence, by a desire to prove to the world that they were not afraid of the United States. For the Khmer Rouge, sheer will power could defeat superior military strength.

The other side of the coin of this fanaticism was paranoia. When it took power in Cambodia in 1975, the Khmer Rouge saw threats from all directions—from the Thai, from the Vietnamese and from internal "traitors." Its policies only made things worse. Irrationally, it thought that the mass murder by which it would "purify" its own society would strengthen Cambodia for external struggles. (There is nothing in Morris' documentation, by the way, that supports the idea that U.S. policies in Cambodia during the war had anything to do with this.)

Just as Morris believes the Vietnamese pushed the Chinese too hard, spurred by ideology, the Khmer Rouge provoked the Vietnamese into the December 1978 invasion of Cambodia (which in turn provoked a Chinese attack on Vietnam to "teach Vietnam a lesson"). In both cases we see the phenomenon of the weaker party provoking the stronger, ultimately against its own interests.

It is this that leads Morris to his ruminations on political culture and political irrationality. These parts of the book are sometimes persuasive, sometimes not. Under the rubric of "political culture" he lumps together a number of disparate phenomena, from bravado to ideology, to culture, to clinical paranoia—an uneasy blend of sociology and psychiatry, applied equally to the behavior of both the Khmer Rouge and the North Vietnamese. What these "irrational" elements have in common is mainly that they all demonstrate, in Morris' view, that "realist" approaches to international politics, based on "objective" calculations of power and national interest, do not explain everything in life. That is true enough. But in places the analysis is strained, as if the author had been forced by academic fashion to build a grand theoretical construct around his valuable research. Or else he is trying too hard to poke holes in "realist" philosophy.

He may be knocking a straw man. No serious analyst of international politics discounts the intangible or psychological factor—or the simple notion of miscalculation. It is not unusual, either, for leaders of weak countries to try to mask their countries' weakness, or compensate for it, by force of will. Charles de Gaulle and Hafez al-Asad have done so quite successfully. Sheer stubbornness, or a show of being less risk-averse than a stronger opponent, can be a potent political weapon. Indeed, Chairman Mao adopted this as a strategy toward the Soviets—professing to be either oblivious to the costs of nuclear war or willing to draw an invading Soviet army deep into the interior of the country in order to envelop it. Bravado perhaps, but it had a deterrent effect. Facing an overwhelmingly superior Soviet military machine, this Chinese strategy may have been entirely rational. Granted, there is always a risk of overdoing it—the Soviets came close to taking a whack at China in 1969.

Nor is the argument for North Vietnamese "irrationality" as strong as that with respect to the Khmer Rouge. No one now doubts that

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the Khmer Rouge were certifiably sociopathic. But Vietnam's 1978 invasion of Cambodia—the eponymous subject of the book—seems easy enough to understand as a response to repeated provocations by a hostile neighbor not only egregious in its behavior but also—by that time—linked geopolitically to China. As Morris acknowledges, Vietnam's presumption of hegemonial tutelage over Indochina played a role as well. And, despite the "lesson" taught them by Deng Xiaoping, the Vietnamese did knock over the Khmer Rouge regime.

AN AMERICAN could be forgiven for regretting that the American role in all this was so marginal. That is not just narcissism. After the collapse of 1975, some observers like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., noted happily that no dominoes fell, other than Laos and Cambodia; this was thought to vindicate the antiwar position. A superficial analysis, unfortunately. First of all, it was the Chinese who saved our bacon in Southeast Asia, stepping in as a counterweight to Soviet and Vietnamese dominance—by propping up Thailand, for example. Second, it was the people of Indochina—especially Cambodia—who paid the price. For one instrument that China used to counter Vietnamese influence was, of course, the Khmer Rouge; the Cambodian civil war went on for fifteen more years, until the Sino-Soviet rapprochement at the end of the 1980s prompted a Sino-Vietnamese accommodation in Cambodia.

In the end, as Morris says, China looks like the winner. With the Soviets gone, Vietnam no longer poses a serious problem. Indeed, when that erstwhile tool of Hanoi, Hun Sen, seized control of Cambodia in a July 1997 coup, the Chinese did not seem to care. Hanoi and Beijing seem rather to be finding common ground today in shoring up their anachronistic communist regimes against the contagion of Western political ideas.

But now the United States scrambles to get back into the game in Southeast Asia—signing accords to regain naval access to the Philippines, crossing its fingers as Indonesia faces an uncertain future, looking on hesitantly as China turns Burma into a base of its own and asserts itself more boldly in the South China Sea. Losing a war is never good for one's strategic position. □

Peter W. Rodman, a former White House and State Department official, is director of National Security Programs at The Nixon Center.

Technology and Modesty

Next to Pangloss, Pandora and Jefferson lurks Icarus, to remind us of the ultimate limits of all human technology—the modern extension of human hubris. The intractability of nature is ameliorated but not overcome by our technical mastery of the world. Our own human foibles infect our technology . . . and it will never be less imperfect than the men and women who create and utilize it. If our fallibility entails the fallibility of our technology, no prudent citizen or statesman will look exclusively to technology for the solution to modern dilemmas. . . . The posture we need in considering the relationship of politics and technology is thus one of wariness and caution—a thorough knowledge of history, a thorough awareness of what can go wrong with schemes that seem so right, a thorough and prudent modesty, rooted in a recognition of our own essential limits as transient beings in a world we control only by permitting ourselves to be controlled by it.

—Benjamin Barber, *A Passion For Democracy*

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Letters

Second Thoughts:

Francis Fukuyama still believes that the inevitable result of natural human progress is liberal democracy and free-market economics ("Second Thoughts: The Last Man in a Bottle", Summer 1999). But he fears what will happen when science gives us the "knowledge and technologies that will allow us to accomplish what social engineers of the past failed to do." It is a fear E.O. Wilson does not share. Wilson says we will recognize that, outside of carefully controlled situations, the results of gene manipulation cannot be controlled. We will accept that changing one factor in the human make-up may result in far-reaching and negative changes. We will then draw back from the abyss.

This presumes, however, that people will suddenly gain an appreciation of what has been called "the law of unintended consequences"—actions produce reactions frequently neither equal nor opposite. Then, too, there is the self-propelled nature of scientific investigation, with its corollary assumption that everything that can be done should be done. In its more extreme form, this might be called the Albert Speer Syndrome—achieve success at any cost, regardless of the nature of the task or the methods.

Perhaps what Fukuyama really got wrong was inevitability. Little in life is inevitable until it actually happens. It may even be a good thing that challenges will always arise, that even the most desirable "ultimate" society is not inevitable and may never be fully achieved. One part of optimizing human nature is facing and overcoming challenges. Without them, things will get rather boring, and boredom can be dangerous.

Bruce L. Brager
Arlington, VA

It is difficult to find evidence against a more modest version of Fukuyama's rich thesis: The modernity that has come to Western Europe and North America will very likely come by the same process to almost all of the rest of the world over the next century or two; and when it does, poverty, tyranny and major war will be removed from the world as they are from these regions—at least for a while. But a big question remains:

Will modernity—wealth and democracy—be sustained? Very likely some democracies will turn nasty in one way or another. Some will fail and some others will learn to do better; but it is also possible that democracy contains some yet unnamed seed of its own destruction.

For have humans really achieved the perfect end which Harvey Mansfield says is implied by a progressive view of history? Quite the contrary: as we have seen in our own experience, people who are rich, free and safe may be either happy or unhappy, good or bad, bored or challenged. Even without poverty, tyranny and war there remain plenty of challenges, both in personal life and on the

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broader stage. The story of human life, then, may become the story of what new purposes people find in life and how they meet the challenges of wealth, freedom, power and knowledge—and perhaps what happens to their relationship with God.

Max Singer
Chevy Chase, MD

China's Hollow Military:

The article "China's Hollow Military" by Bates Gill and Michael O'Hanlon in your Summer 1999 issue misleads. It sets up the dubious straw man claim that China's strategic ambitions significantly challenge the United States and its allies in East Asia, which the authors then demolish with the title's "hollow military" and with the derisory phrase "splashed missiles off the Taiwanese coast."

As for the meaning of the latter phrase, the facts are these: China used its modest military capabilities in the March 1996 Taiwan Strait exercise to affect the outcome of Taiwan's upcoming presidential election. As part of that effort, the Chinese fired M-9 ballistic missiles into the sea near Taiwan, exercised elements of eight infantry divisions along the mainland coast, deployed naval battle units in the western part of the Strait, flew mock combat missions with IL-76 and SU-27 aircraft, and deployed SA-10B SAMS.

But the Taiwan Strait exercise also shook up East Asia by provoking the rapid deployment of the *Nimitz* and *Independence* carrier battle groups to the area, reinforcing the U.S.-Japan strategic alliance and helping stimulate planning for the largest joint U.S.-Australia-New Zealand military exercise since World War II. Finally, it had the unintended consequence of energizing the independence movement on Taiwan. None of these reactions could have been welcome to Beijing's leaders.

It is of course very much in the U.S. national interest that Beijing and Taipei "heal the wound" between them, and the sooner the better. This would go some distance toward stabilizing an unstable East Asia that is undergoing revolutionary transformations, and that is too heavy with military capabilities, including nuclear weapons and precision-guided missiles. But the question is: heal the wound on what terms? The United States can and must play a constructive role, but not on the basis of setting up and demolishing straw men before we even start.

Robert F. Ellsworth
Washington, DC

The Gill-O'Hanlon article dismisses China as a military power for at least twenty years.

Despite China's outmoded military, it closed the Taiwan Strait in 1996 when it fired missiles in protest of Taiwan's first direct presidential elections. The United States would not tolerate a similar action, say, from Iran in the Persian Gulf. This different reaction is determined by China's nuclear capability and its economic importance. Beijing's geopolitical power, especially in its looming sphere of influence, is not to be narrowly defined as growing out of the barrel of a dated conventional gun.

That China's military technologically lags behind that of the United States is true today, but it may not always be so. How many times have we been stunned by technological leaps in countries like Iran, Pakistan or North Korea? Beijing's ambition for advanced weaponry will only be speeded by stolen secrets from our nuclear labs, legitimate sales of U.S. supercomputers, and a virtual free flow of industrial technology from Silicon Valley.

Then, too, China's proliferation of missile technology to rogue regimes via its North Korean conduit undercuts the authors' assertion that Chinese challenges are "confined primarily to the islands and waterways to China's south and southeast." Should Beijing's amassing power result first in a Chinese Monroe Doctrine and then in a "Finlandized" East Asia, this would not bode well for U.S. interests.

Thomas Henriksen
The Hoover Institution

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Gill and O'Hanlon reply:

We agree with Ambassador Ellsworth and Mr. Henriksen that East Asia is a dangerous place and that the United States often has critical strategic differences with China. In our article, we also explicitly commended the congressional Cox panel's report and its frequently worthy policy recommendations. But our critics take on questions well beyond the scope of our article, a point best illustrated by the fact that they do not attempt to refute our core contentions: that China's conventional military capabilities are very limited, particularly for naval and air engagements in places such as the Taiwan Strait, where the United States and the PRC are most likely to clash, and that China's military capabilities will remain quite mediocre for years to come.

Undemocratic Capitalism:

David Zweig ("Undemocratic Capitalism: China and the Limits of Economism", Summer 1999) has put forward a sweeping counterattack to my article in these pages (Fall 1996) predicting that China will become a democracy by 2015.

He says much that is true and important about today's China. There is widespread rent-seeking and corruption, the Party looks determined to preserve its hold on power, and the leadership clearly fears social unrest from workers fired from privatized firms.

He asks who will check the bureaucracy. The main answer is the market, because growth will slow if it is not given more scope. He also asks whether managers will advocate a more open political system if labor unrest threatens. Presumably not, but one should not count on managers' doing this in any case. And he asks about the social and political consequences of further openness to the world. These are already substantial and will only become more so.

Zweig writes that democratic politics needs a class of private property owners and that this requires an expansion of market forces, property rights and less bureaucratic authority. This is all true, but there is a two-way process at work. In one direction, these attributes are needed for sustained growth; in the other, greater wealth increases the demand for them. Wealth also fosters the political institutions Zweig rightly sees as necessary to meet the demands of a new middle class, although there is often a time lag before they appear.

Like many country specialists, Zweig abjures comparisons. Why should China stay authoritarian while all other states that have reached the economic level it seems likely to achieve within two decades have plural polities? Two explanations come to mind: one is that China is fundamentally different; the other is that its disabilities will keep it poor and authoritarian.

On China being different, he nowhere mentions the democratization of Taiwan, Singapore or, in its way, Hong Kong. (Singapore gets a bad press, but Freedom House does rate it "partly free.") Every place is different; Taiwan was much influenced by the Americans, Singapore and Hong Kong by the British. But imagine life and politics in China if and when its per capita GDP reaches the level of South Korea, Taiwan or Spain today ($14,000-$16,000). People will be far better educated, many will have the means to travel widely and will long since have gained access to the world media. There will be a large middle class. Zweig should try to make plausible a scenario of single party control under such conditions.

He might maintain that this is a pie-in-the-sky scenario, or at least one well beyond 2015, but if one accepts that there is some income level at which China becomes politically pluralist, the argument reduces to a matter of *when* and *how*, not *whether*. The worldwide evidence suggests that it will be when China reaches about one-half the per capita income of Taiwan or Spain. As to how it gets there, I suspect no one has a confident basis for prediction; and, of course, none of this assures a smooth transition to democracy. But the other possibility—that China's income never

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reaches the level that has universally yielded stable democracy—seems most unlikely.

Henry Rowen
Asia/Pacific Research Center
Stanford University, CA

Rethinking Europe:

Charles Kupchan's thoughts on Europe, well argued as they are, beg several questions ("Rethinking Europe", Summer 1999). First, what kind of regional organization would NATO remain if it were able to intervene in any crisis bordering, let's say, China, Iran or Greece? Would it become the UN's iron fist? Or would the Security Council become NATO's puppy? Second, who would have the guts to offer Russia the prominence inside the alliance it would then demand? Among other things, Russia would digest NATO's budget. And are NATO countries really prepared to trust Russia? What guarantees do we have that Russia will not play dirty in moments of crisis? Finally, what assurance is there that the reforms in Russia will go forward to a successful conclusion?

When we have concrete answers to these questions, I shall be prepared to give Kupchan's idea a second thought. But until then, the best that can be hoped for is amicable relations between NATO and Russia.

Viorel Andrievici
Sibiu, Romania

Kupchan replies:

Viorel Andrievici worries that if NATO continues to expand eastward and includes Russia, the alliance might become too powerful and wide-ranging, at times overshadowing the UN and acting without its approval. It is too late. As recent events in the Balkans have made clear, NATO, not the UN, calls the shots in Europe and is prepared to act without the blessing of the UN Security Council. Furthermore, without its own standing army the UN has no choice but to delegate responsibility to regional organizations and seek to work with them more effectively to prevent and stop conflict.

As to the risks of including Russia in NATO, Andrievici seems to forget that the purpose of the alliance is not just to protect its members from external threats but also to bind its members to each other. NATO played a critical role in integrating a defeated Germany into the West. It should now do the same with Russia. To be sure, Russia is still in the midst of an uncertain transition. But by proceeding cautiously and gradually, NATO can work toward anchoring Russia in the West without taking undue risks.

To Sing a Different Song:

We appreciated James Kurth's recent article, "To Sing a Different Song" (Summer 1999), in which he advocated a third way for the Baltic states—a capturing of the middle ground between NATO membership on the one hand and complete isolation from the West (military and otherwise) on the other. He calls for the Baltic states to weigh the opposing forces of NATO and Russia, west and east, against one another, and in doing so perform a balancing act similar to the one performed by Finland during the Cold War.

Professor Kurth acknowledges that this third way "is a path decisively rejected by the Baltic states themselves." Perhaps we can explain why this is so in the case of Estonia. The bottom line for our country is that historically, culturally and economically it is and has always been part of the West European community. By contrast, Estonia's connection to the USSR was coerced militarily, and the United States in fact never recognized Estonia as a member of the USSR.

One of the most convincing pro-expansion arguments I have heard was put to me by a senator's legislative director, who pointed out that to invite the Baltic states to join NATO would only serve to clarify U.S. policy in the region. That is, if the United States made its position on the region more open (i.e., with an official military alliance), everyone would

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know where everyone else stood.

When Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott was asked at a recent press conference on the occasion of the second annual U.S.-Baltic Charter Conference if a second round of NATO expansion, which would include the Baltic states, was inevitable, he responded, "I would stop just short of saying it's inevitable. It is desirable." Indeed, the appeal of Estonian membership in NATO is becoming more and more manifest. As Talbott also said in the same press conference, "Security and stability in southern Europe are going to depend on exactly the kind of integration, institution building, and democratization that are already so far advanced in northern Europe, and specifically, in the Baltic region."

Ethan D. Goodson
Embassy of the Republic of Estonia

Fixing the IMF:

Professors Calomiris and Meltzer have proposed sweeping changes in the IMF and, indeed, in the international monetary system ("Fixing the IMF", Summer 1999). Before commenting on these changes, and to illustrate the complexity of implementing their suggestions, I had occasion recently to discuss with a U.S. Treasury official a very slight change in the IMF Articles of Agreement that would allow the IMF to borrow in various currencies. The institution is now restricted (sadly) to borrowing only in securities denominated in SDRs, unless it wants to assume an exchange risk. Dollar and other hard currency borrowing without an exchange risk would vastly increase the Fund's ability to tap private and other markets in times of dire need.

The official at the Treasury was skeptical of my suggestion, because of the extreme difficulty in getting the 183 member nations—not to mention members of Congress—to agree on *any* changes. If such a small change is so difficult to implement, what of the authors' suggestions that the IMF could not lend to any country that had not adopted the severe new banking standards outlined by them, and that member governments must contribute marketable bonds to the IMF as a method of funding?

The authors further state that their proposals "would prevent the IMF from giving ad hoc foreign assistance to insolvent financial systems", and that "the IMF would lose . . . its power to demand policy changes as a condition of its loans." I may be missing something here, but it is my firm belief that we desperately need the IMF to offer temporary assistance to faltering economies, and that it is the only instrument we have to enforce worthwhile changes as a condition of its loans.

Other suggestions by Calomiris and Meltzer include abolishing the Treasury's Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) and using World Bank loans "to strengthen [commercial] banks' capital structures." But without the collateralized ESF loan, Mexico, for example, might not have recovered from its currency crisis. The articles of the World Bank state that the Bank must lend to development projects, and that loans must be guaranteed by a member government. But it would be highly unwise to divert the resources of the World Bank for such purposes.

It is regrettable that the authors have chosen not to join us in the real world. Instead, they have proposed steps to alter the world economy and to effect changes at the IMF that are unsound and that will be impossible to implement.

Eugene Robert Black
East Hampton, NY

Calomiris and Meltzer reply:

Mr. Black argues two points: First, the IMF, ESF and other institutions are unchangeable on practical grounds, so why bother trying? Second, the IMF's discretion to orchestrate bailouts (in Mexico, for example) is worth preserving even if it were feasible to eliminate.

With respect to the possibility of change at the IMF, not only has its mission changed dramatically over the years, but its financing structure also

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has changed; specifically, it has created new ways of financing itself (through the General Arrangements to Borrow and the New Arrangements to Borrow), which permit it to lend far in excess of member quotas. And the establishment this past year of the Contingent Credit Line facility suggests significant latitude for changing the way IMF assistance is provided. Many of our suggestions can be construed largely as means of improving that new facility. We admit that it will be difficult to forge the consensus necessary to implement our other proposals to limit IMF bailouts—difficult but not impossible. The plethora of new commissions and study groups considering changes in the IMF, and the growing size and destabilizing consequences of IMF-orchestrated bailouts, suggest a new range of opportunities for reform.

As for Mr. Black's view that the IMF's "rescue" of Mexico was helpful, we think otherwise. The wealth of a generation of Mexico's middle-class citizens has been wiped out by the tax liability they bear for the bailout. A resolution of that crisis that shifted more of the burden of repayment from Mexican taxpayers to insolvent domestic banks, Mexican conglomerates and foreign lenders would have been far superior. It would have cost the taxpayers less, instilled new market discipline in the financial system, and shortened the credit crunch that still plagues Mexico. The difficulty the PRI is having in holding on to power in this election year suggests that the Mexican people may share our view.

We submit that these facts are from the "real world", although perhaps not as it is experienced in East Hampton.

Ceausescu's Legacy:

How long can Ceausescu's legacy be invoked to explain Romania's difficult transition to democracy? Can the late dictator's erratic policies—convincingly examined in Tom Gallagher's essay ("Ceausescu's Legacy", Summer 1999)—account fully for today's troubles? Ten years after the December 1989 uprising, a new explanation is needed. After all, Romania's revolution (the only bloody one in the Soviet bloc) was applauded at the time as the beginning of a new era. What followed, however, was the retrenchment of the *nomenklatura* and an attempt by Ceausescu's successors to prevent a resolute break with the past.

Among those successors, former president Ion Iliescu played a crucial role. Pretending to be a revolutionary, Iliescu pursued policies directly opposed to those that led to major transformations in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Iliescu and his Party of Social Democracy are primarily responsible for the dismal state of Romanian politics between 1990-96. It was only in November 1996, when democratic forces won parliamentary and presidential elections, that the country took steps to de-communize its major institutions and privatize its industrial sector.

But even after 1996 things have not moved as fast as many Romanians hoped. President Emil Constantinescu's government has focused on foreign policy, and done little to further the aims of social trust, a robust civil society and an open market. Rabid demagogues like Corneliu Vadim Tudor are of course exploiting the vulnerabilities of the pluralist order, but the real beneficiary of public discontent is Iliescu himself (a point not mentioned by Gallagher). A recent poll shows that 35 percent of Romanians would vote for the former communist as president, versus only 26 percent for Constantinescu. A restoration of the Iliescu regime—i.e., a return to ultracentralism, statism, kleptocratic cronyism and ethnocentric authoritarianism—is in my view the main threat to Romania's democratic future.

Vladimir Tismaneanu
University of Maryland

Gallagher replies:

When Vladimir Tismaneanu describes the regime of Ion Iliescu in such an unflattering light, I fully agree with him. Where we part company is when he describes a comeback by Iliescu as "the main threat to Romania's democratic future."

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A greater threat is the proprietorial attitude to power exhibited by all the main parties in government since 1990, including the avowedly reformist ones now in office. One of the main culprits is Petre Roman's Democratic Party, which has blocked restitution of property to pre-communist owners, largely to protect some of its own privileged supporters. I doubt if Professor Tismaneanu would be so ready now to describe Roman's party as "a dynamic formation committed to the values of European social democracy", as he was in his otherwise fine 1998 book, *Fantasies of Salvation*.

I, in turn, regret having been so enthusiastic about the Christian Democrats when I see their leading light, Premier Radu Vasile, ready to take what is a center-right party into a future left-wing government. If Romania becomes an Italian-style partyocracy with all of the parties having their noses in the public trough, it will produce an unbridgeable cleavage between state and society.

I doubt if the vote for Iliescu's party will be significantly higher in 2000 than it was in 1996. But this insincere democrat could still win a resounding victory if the young, the city dwellers, the educated and those not afraid of doing a good day's work abstain from voting.

Whom should they vote for? A party that comes clean and tells Romanians that their government was ruined by a totalitarian system of communism, and that the only way for recovery to start is to ask for outside help from the European Union (and perhaps also Canada and the United States) to rebuild public institutions from the bottom up.

I am convinced such help would be forthcoming, not least because Romania was prepared to stand by NATO over Kosovo, in contrast to other East European countries recently admitted to the Atlantic Alliance.

Bonaparte's Mum:

Herr Joffe's article ("Where Germany Has Never Been Before", Summer 1999) was going along nicely until the last line: "*Pourvu que ça dure*—provided that it lasts—as Napoleon's mother-in-law used to caution." That was not Napoleon's mother-in-law, but his very formidable mother, Letizia. She also saved bits of soap in a tin box, just in case everything fell apart again, as she suspected would happen.

Michael J. Lotus
Chicago, IL

Letters to the Editor

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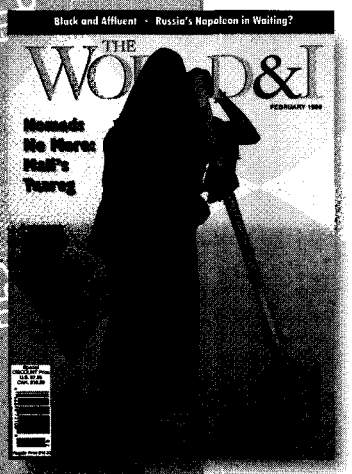

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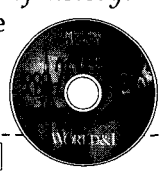

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A Bridge Too Far

Lawrence F. Kaplan

THE NEW millennium arrives with few apocalyptic prophecies. In fact, its approach is having a giddy and, in some cases, narcotic effect on otherwise sober minds. Nowhere has that effect been more in evidence than among those forward-thinking members of Washington's foreign policy community: "At the dawn of a new millennium, we can envision a new era that escapes the twentieth century's darkest moments, fulfills its most brilliant possibilities", President Clinton exults. "The forces of global integration are a great tide, inexorably wearing away the established order of things."

This vision, which has shaped the contours of American foreign policy for most of the past decade, responds to multiple needs unrelated to foreign policy as such. It offers assurance that complex questions of politics and history have been resolved, that autonomous forces will sweep up the detritus of a horrible century, all but making politics and policy irrelevant. Thus, responding to the 1998 Indian nuclear tests, Mr. Clinton advised India "to define [its] greatness in 21st century terms, not in something we've left behind." He likewise enjoined China's sclerotic leadership to get on "the right side of history", confiding to reporters that one of his purposes in visiting with Chinese officials was "to create for them a new and different historical reality." In the President's telling, that reality reduces to a simple narrative of material progress and moral improvement, the benefits of which may already be glimpsed in a New Middle East, an African Renaissance and even in a strategic partnership with China.

Now, ideally, a nation's foreign policies derive from an assessment of the world around it and its own political values. Alas, the millennial paradigm has evolved in response to nothing more than excitement over a calendar date. Recent history, after all, has plainly and quickly confounded the expectation that the post-Cold War era would be a period of international harmony.

And, yet, untroubled by contrary trends, those who presently guide the fortunes of the world's only superpower insist that the twenty-first century will abolish the complexities of international politics. Specifically, it is expected to accomplish this as a result of three things: the rapid and widely celebrated growth in ties of commerce and technology; the embrace of that growth by all but an obdurate few; and, as a consequence of the latter, a fundamental redefinition of the meaning of national security.

AS TO THE first of these, President Clinton has declared that, henceforth, the United States will build "peace through trade, investment and commerce." Indeed, the serene conviction that commercial relations are properly a cause rather than an effect of peace—a belief once thought to have

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been repudiated decisively at the Marne—has lately been revised and enshrined in official policy. The revised version derives mainly from enthusiasm about technological progress. Thus, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, one of the theory's main boosters, maintains that because they allow states and societies to communicate with one another as never before, "the fellow travelers of the new global economy—computers and modems, faxes and photocopiers, increased contacts and binding contracts—carry with them the seeds of [political] change."

But if states and societies are communicating increasingly with one another—as they surely are—the question then arises: Are they saying anything new? Given its manifest reluctance to heed much of anything Washington recommends, India may provide an answer. Throughout the 1990s, a parade of foreign policy analysts and administration officials touted India's integration into the world economy as proof that it would promptly embrace the political logic of globalization. The journal *Foreign Policy*, for example, featured an article announcing that if the administration's strategy proved correct, "India's rising dependence on foreign trade and investment for domestic growth will become a new incentive for stable relations with its neighbors." So pervasive was this assumption that a mere ten days before India's first atomic test, Berger met with its officials and, according to the *New York Times*,

> raised the issue of India's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles only peripherally, stressing instead the need for the world's two largest democracies to build on the common agenda of health, economics, environment, and information technology.

After India promptly proceeded to set off the first in a series of atomic explosions, a reportedly stunned President Clinton admonished that it "can be a very great country without doing things like this." Seconding that appraisal, the *New York Times* opined that India was "swimming against history's currents." Not surprisingly, Indian officials saw things a bit differently. One of the most senior of them, the Indian prime minister's foreign policy adviser, wrote in *Foreign Affairs*:

> The end of the Cold War did not result in the end of history. . . . It would be a great error to assume that simply advocating the new mantras of globalization and the market makes national security subservient to global trade. The 21st century will not be the century of trade. The world still has to address the unfinished agenda of the centuries.

Exactly what that unfinished agenda might be is left unsaid. But its centerpiece is likely something other than a monetary union with Pakistan.

In our relations with China, too, the vision of a commercial peace obfuscates more than it clarifies. Advertising trade deals and export-control waivers as "confidence-building" measures, the administration routinely depicts expanded commercial relations with China as a means of promoting our broader foreign policy aims. But just how much China needs its confidence bolstered has become the subject of considerable debate. For the rapid expansion of China's trade ties with the United States, Japan and Taiwan in recent years has in fact coincided with a worsening of its political relations with all three. Then, too, where President Clinton has portrayed commerce and technology as "a force for change in China, exposing China to our ideas and our ideals", the record of the past decade plainly suggests otherwise.

That countries such as China and India may view the purposes of commerce and technology differently from ourselves hardly comes as a revelation. Indeed, the opinion that nations condition the uses of markets and technology, rather than the other way around, was a staple of an earlier era when technological pessimism prevailed here in the West—most notably in the works of George Orwell, Herbert Marcuse and other analysts of totalitarianism. But in the United States today that belief has been overtaken by a conviction that

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the rationality of market relations somehow foreshadows the rational ordering of international relations. According to this commercialist understanding, because it is rational for human beings to seek prosperity, states will simply abjure conduct that runs counter to that aim.

But is it really necessary to point out that even in an era of globalization the logic of economics is not the logic of politics, much less that of culture or ethnicity? Europe, after all, has been tormented for a decade by a country that not so long ago boasted the highest standard of living in Eastern Europe, but that opted, when the prospect of closer economic ties to the West was dangled before it, to launch four wars and deport an ethnic minority instead. Nor are such tendencies confined to Yugoslavia. Russia, China, North Korea, India, Pakistan, Iraq and Iran, to name but a few others, have in recent years equally subordinated economic interests to pursue aims of a more primal sort. Perhaps they have merely failed to grasp the directional nature of history. Or then again, maybe our willingness to regard impersonal forces as the primary agents of history is itself evidence of a defective brand of politics—with roots not in the twenty-first century, but in the scientific materialism of the nineteenth.

THE PERSISTENCE of nasty and divisive political impulses is, of course, not a fact that policymakers constructing a bridge to the twenty-first century will readily acknowledge. Rather, in accounting for the obduracy of certain states, they advance the proposition that, were it not for a handful of men like Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic, Osama bin Laden and the late Mohamed Farah Aideed, their supporters would eagerly sign on to the millennial program. "You think the Germans would have perpetrated the Holocaust on their own without Hitler?", President Clinton asked in reference to the bestial conduct of Serb forces in Kosovo. "Political leaders do this kind of thing."

Now, on the face of it, this sort of personalization of contemporary history may seem to be in sharp contradiction to the belief in the ineluctable logic of globalization. But there is an escape clause: for while these cartoon villains are blamed for the world's current troubles, it is also insisted that they are essentially anachronisms, a residue from a rapidly vanishing past. Not only are they evil but they are, in the larger scheme of things, irrelevant. Indeed, their very existence offers proof that hitherto intractable dilemmas of politics and ideology have been solved.

The war in Kosovo provided the clearest illustration of the defects in this line of thinking. From the first shot, the President depicted the NATO campaign as a battle against a lone "cynical leader" and his "distorted view of what constitutes national greatness." But that distorted view was soon revealed to be shared by virtually every institution in Serbian society, from the Orthodox Church and the democratic opposition to the Yugoslav Army and the Belgrade intelligentsia. Nevertheless, having argued itself into a surgical air campaign that was meant to last no more than three to four days, the administration clung to the fiction that it could use force as a medium for negotiating between elites, that to halt ethnic cleansing it merely needed to persuade Milosevic to, in the words of President Clinton, "change his mind."

But just how many minds needed to be changed could soon be gleaned in the faces of a million traumatized deportees, and in the giddiness of thousands of Belgrade concert-goers, exultant at the crimes being perpetrated in their name. President Clinton's claim that "our quarrel is not with the Serbian people" notwithstanding, in order to accomplish its aims, NATO—by purposefully (and rightly) adjusting its campaign to inflict greater hardships on the Serbian populace and thereby diminish public support for the course of their popularly elected president—was forced to concede that our quarrel was precisely with them.

What the West ran up against in Yugoslavia was, finally, not a man but a creed.

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To judge by the foreign policy priorities of the Clinton administration, there are in the world today only two sources of political legitimacy—democracy and economic growth. But there is a third, one often declared to be passé but to which modern states repair with ever greater frequency: that is nationalism. Those who discount this ideology as the preserve of anachronistic despots do so at the cost of discounting developments likely to have serious and lasting consequences for American national security policy. For whether in Europe and Asia today or a century ago, nationalism has been sustained and exacerbated not by what the President dismisses as "fourteenth-century values", but by the same progress he routinely champions—the very dislocations that have characterized the modern era and that have only intensified in an era of globalization.

TO BE FAIR, Washington's millenarians concede on at least one point that progress may indeed be a double-sided coin. "The openness and freedom of movement that we so cherish about this modern world actually make us more vulnerable to a host of threats—terrorists, drug cartels, international criminals—that have no respect for borders", warns President Clinton. To the discussion of these "twenty-first century predators", members of the administration bring the same millennial ardor that distinguishes their approach to the global economy. In this instance, however, what stirs their imaginations is not a utopian delusion but rather a dystopian version of technological progress.

Thus in the very weeks leading up to the ransacking of Kosovo, the President and his diplomatic counselors took to the airwaves with an ominous warning: the sky, they advised, was falling. But, oddly, the alarm they were sounding had nothing to do with the escalation of Serb depredations. What so agitated the Clinton team was, rather, what its members refer to as the "new transnational security threats"—a catalogue of twenty-first century perils ranging from cyber-terrorism and crime syndicates to global warming and the flu.

No two administration officials, however, seem able to agree on exactly which items should be included in this inventory. With a fine sweep, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott discerns national security challenges "from the floor of the stock exchange in Singapore to the roof of the world over Patagonia where there is a hole in the ozone layer." The Joint Chiefs of Staff dutifully cite "spreading diseases" as a security threat. And while Vice President Gore likens the struggle to contain global environmental degradation to past American efforts against the Soviet Union, the President himself touts a "Cybercorps" and the Human Genome Project as the best guarantors of national security.

The *New York Times* has reported that the administration's preoccupation with unconventional threats owes much to *The Cobra Event*, Richard Preston's novel about biological terrorism, which Mr. Clinton found profoundly unsettling. Perhaps true (the President's earlier views on Bosnia were derived, after all, from Robert Kaplan's account of his travels through the Balkans), but there is more. "There are still some who refuse to accept that confronting these new threats is real, serious foreign policy", Madeleine Albright warns. "Like Bismarck, they want to play geopolitical chess." And members of the administration have dismissed as "yesterday's preoccupations" and "stratocrap and globaloney" the opinion that national security refers ultimately to military concerns. It is rather the "new" threats, to which Mr. Clinton cautions "our vulnerability is real and growing", that pose the urgent danger.

Already we see how that conviction affects policy deliberations—and how it has, in fact, been revealed to have things exactly backward. Consider, to begin with, last year's missile attack on a reputed nerve agent factory in Sudan. The facility had been mistakenly certified as such by an intelligence community that had recently replaced many of its counter-terrorism specialists with biologists and chemists. It was

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then culled from a menu of mostly conventional targets (and selected without the input of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) by White House war-managers apparently eager to prove the existence of the new threats. Never mind that evidence of nerve gas production was flimsy at best. And never mind that the crimes the strikes were intended to avenge had been carried out with car bombs—still the weapons of choice for twentieth-century terrorists—not germs or toxins. The Clinton team, in a textbook case of mirror-imaging, saw what it wanted and expected to see.

Elsewhere, too, the tendency to subordinate fact to wish has been apparent. Indeed, as the administration has in recent years mistaken hypothetical vulnerabilities for actual threats, it has mostly ignored the persistence of those threats that have been clearly evident all along—demonstrable perils in South Asia, East Asia and other places that do not accord with its world-view. Meanwhile, there exists scant evidence to bolster the claims of the new Cassandras, and much to suggest that their talk of "redefining", "reconceptualizing" and "reinventing" national security is futurism of the most facile and shallow kind.

TO BE SURE, today's forecasts may be proved correct tomorrow. But the numerous defects of the millennial outlook—its reckless disdain for historical experience, its presumption of universal norms and its straight-line projections—make that unlikely. Too many states still play by the old rules, and have proved quite oblivious to the contention that politics and military power no longer serve as the principal currencies of international relations. Perhaps, as the President insists, they will soon bend to the right side of history. But as the record of the past decade clearly indicates, to be prematurely correct in matters of foreign policy—to perceive opportunities and dangers not as they are, but as we wish them to be—can be as disastrous as being absolutely wrong. If American policymakers continue to delude themselves on this count, they may soon awaken to discover that, rather than to the twenty-first century, they have built themselves a bridge to nowhere. □

Interdependence = Friction

Observe the perpetual quarrels, the robberies, the usurpations, the revolts, the wars, the murders, which bring daily desolation to this venerable home of philosophy, this brilliant sanctuary of art and science. Consider our fair speeches and abominable acts, the boundless humanity of our maxims and the boundless cruelty of our deeds; our religion so merciful and our intolerance so ferocious; our policy so mild in our textbooks and so harsh in our acts; our rulers so beneficent and our people so wretched; our governments so temperate and our wars so savage: and then tell me how to reconcile these glaring contradictions; tell me if this alleged brotherhood of the nations of Europe is anything more than a bitter irony to denote their mutual hatred.

But, in truth, what else was to be expected? Every community without laws and without rulers, every union formed and maintained by nothing better than chance, must inevitably fall into quarrels and dissensions at the first change that comes about. The historic union of the nations of Europe has entangled their rights and interests in a thousand complications; they touch each other at so many points that no one of them can move without giving a jar to all the rest; their variances are all the more deadly, as their ties are more closely woven; their frequent quarrels are almost as savage as civil wars.

—J. J. Rousseau, *A Project for Perpetual Peace*

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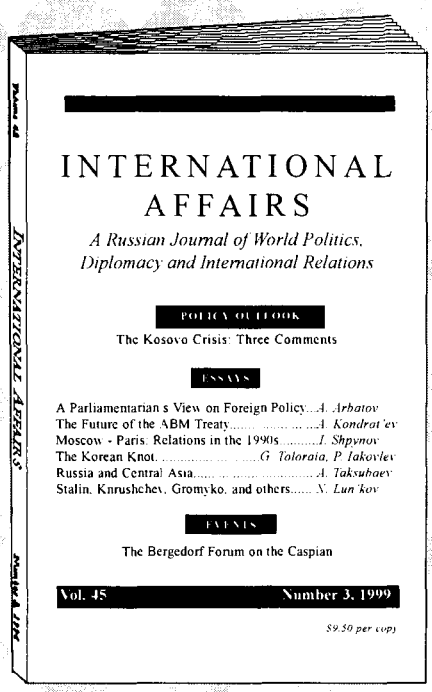
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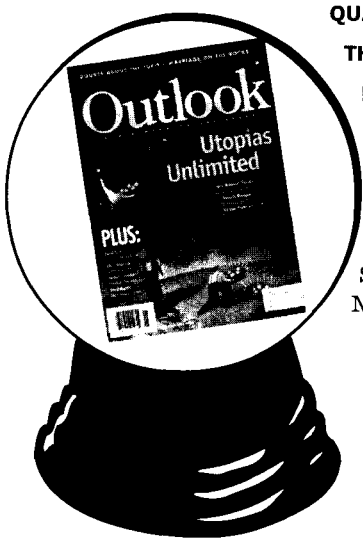

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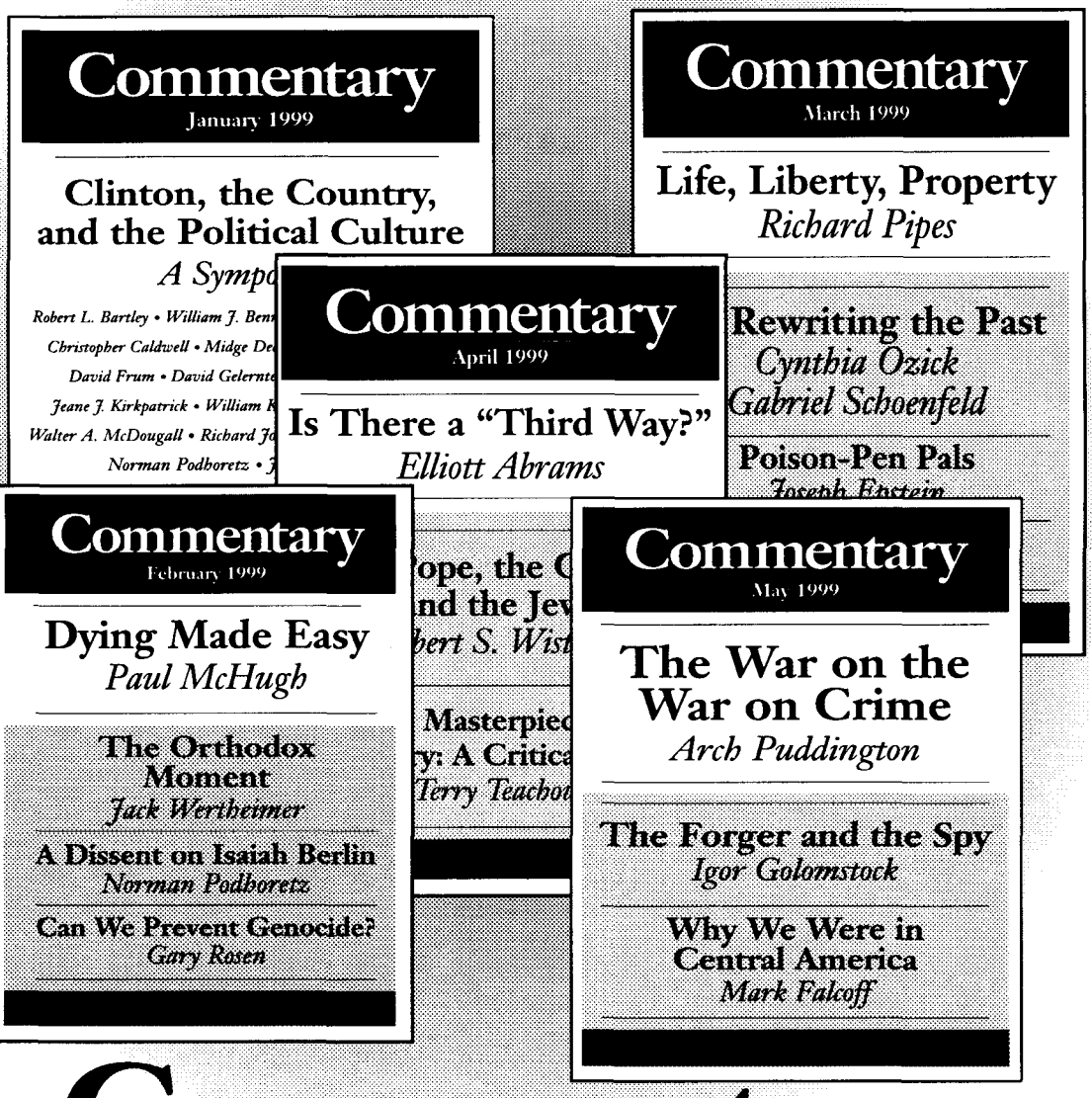

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